

Germany to reconsider war payment

BONN (R) — Germany, which sent no troops to the Gulf but pledged to help foot the bill for the war, is reconsidering its cash contribution to Washington, the government said Wednesday. Lutz Stavenhagen, a senior aide to Chancellor Helmut Kohl, said in reply to a question in parliament that Bonn would discuss with Washington reports that the actual costs of the war were less than the total pledged by U.S. allies. The third and last payment of Germany's cash contribution to the war costs is due at the end of the month, but "in the light of the discussions, it will be reconsidered," Mr. Stavenhagen said. Germany did not send forces to the Gulf. The constitution limits it to defence of the country or its NATO allies. The government earmarked \$11 billion in cash and equipment for the U.S.-led coalition after criticism at home and abroad that it was slow to back the war against Iraq. The figure included \$5.5 billion in the 1991 budget for Washington. A Finance Ministry official said some of this had still to be delivered. On Monday, an opposition politician said the United States was seeking billions of dollars more than it spent on the Gulf war and urged Bonn not to hand over some of the money (see page 2).

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Tehran, Riyadh resume ties

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iran and Saudi Arabia announced Wednesday that they agreed to restore diplomatic relations, ending a three-year feud between the two competing dynasts of the Muslim World.

Official announcements in both capitals said diplomatic relations would resume Tuesday, but did not say at what level.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have decided to resume bilateral relations as of March 26, 1991," Tehran Radio said.

A Saudi Foreign Ministry statement read over Riyadh Radio later said the agreement followed recent contacts between the two governments.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati met with his Saudi counterpart, Prince Saud Al Faisal, in Oman Monday. It was the third meeting between these two officials in recent

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Kohl assures Jewish leaders of support

BONN (R) — Germany wants a peaceful new order in the Middle East guaranteeing Israel's existence but also addressing the Palestinian question, Chancellor Helmut Kohl's spokesman said Wednesday. "Germany, along with the United States and our European partners, is working towards a comprehensive, lasting and just peace order in the Middle East," the spokesman quoted Mr. Kohl as telling American Jewish leaders Tuesday night. "This peace order must guarantee Israel's security and right to exist and lead to a solution to the Palestinian question," the spokesman said in a statement after Mr. Kohl's meeting with an American-Jewish Committee (AJC) delegation. The statement said Mr. Kohl assured the delegation of Bonn's support but did not mention the supply of German technology and equipment to Iraq, which the group said was the major issue of concern to them.

Kurds clash with police in Turkey

ADANA (AP) — Police opened fire on 1,000 Kurdish demonstrators Wednesday, and local reporters said at least 15 people were wounded. The semi-official news agency Anatolia said the demonstration was held on the outskirts of this southern city to celebrate a Kurdish holiday marking the arrival of spring. About 60,000 Kurdish immigrants live in the district. Local reporters said in telephone interviews that police opened fire to disperse the demonstrators and that police officers were among the wounded. Demonstrators carried banners with slogans marking the holiday and supporting an independent Kurdistan homeland, the reporters said. Demonstrators set four police vehicles on fire, according to Anatolia. Police detained about 100 demonstrators.

Kuwait to issue new exit permits

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait will issue new exit permits to meet objections from Saudi Arabia which this week turned back hundreds of Kuwaitis trying to cross the border to stock up on provisions, Kuwait Radio said Wednesday. It quoted an Interior Ministry official, Abdul Hamid Haji, as saying he had discussed the problem with the Saudi ambassador to Kuwait. "From tomorrow, the new exit forms will be distributed in accordance with the amendments required by the Saudis," the radio said. Kuwait has issued almost 50,000 exit permits to its citizens since the Iraqi army left the emirate three weeks ago. Thousands queued for the permits, many wanting to buy food and other goods which are scarce or unobtainable in Kuwait, still without electricity, water or telephones.

Post-war Iraq: Struggle of another sort has just begun

Aware of pressure, Iraqi leadership hopes to reintegrate without power change

By Lamis K. Andoni

The writer, *Jordan Times* Staff Reporter, has just returned from Baghdad after spending the past several weeks there. This is the first in a series of articles in which she will attempt to shed light on political developments and public sentiments in the post-war era in Iraq.

AS EXTERNAL and internal pressures mount on Iraq, the Iraqi leadership is engaged in a race against time to get the country back on its feet and reintegrate it into the international community without a change in the regime.

"We have to change the status quo without changing the system," a well-placed Iraqi official said in describing the challenge faced by the Iraqi leadership.

But, as Iraqi officials concede, the prospects of the survival of the regime are grim without fundamental changes within the system — involving genuine democratisation and the adoption of "a flexible" foreign policy.

Yet, at the same time, the

potential threat of the spread of Iranian-backed fundamentalism could practically work as a major factor making the continuity of the regime crucial to the Iraqi people who strongly oppose Iran's renewed drive to assert itself as the major powerbroker in the Gulf.

"If the regime collapses there will be a dangerous power vacuum leading to total destabilisation and civil war. Iran will become stronger and perhaps uncontrollable," said an Iraqi analyst.

Three weeks after the ceasefire, some Iraqi officials conclude that the U.S. objective has so far been to weaken the regime but not necessarily to topple it.

The spread of predominantly Shi'ite unrest in the south and reported Iranian-backed, anti-government violence have provoked serious fears in Baghdad of an unprecedented sedition that could lead to an uncontrollable civil war.

A major question that has been raised in Baghdad focuses on the nature of the political concessions and if Iraq will be practically allowed to pursue an independent and Arab nationalist policy even if the regime remained in power.

For example, will Iraq agree to a U.N. resolution to eliminate

mass destruction weapons and, if so, will that only be a prelude to other, more substantial political concessions?

Some Iraqi officials agree that Baghdad might have to head major demands by the U.S. and the international community such as the destruction of chemical weapons to ensure the survival of the regime and the country.

They expect the U.S. to prolong the lifting of the international embargo against Iraq and to use the sanctions to extract further political concessions and possibly to step up even further popular pressures against the regime.

However, President Saddam Hussein's most recent speech last week, in which he pledged to democratise the country, indicated that the leadership wanted to maintain its line on Arab issues, especially its support of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

In an article published in the Baathist Party newspaper, *Al Thawra*, Saadoun Hammadi, a senior aide of President Saddam, suggested that Iraq and the system could survive without changing its basic policies.

Dr. Hammadi's article appeared to provide a glimpse of the internal political debate, especially that there are officials who feel that Iraq's pre-war involvement and commitment to Arab causes should come to an end if the country was to be integrated and accepted by the international community.

The government might and probably will accept the destruction of chemical weapons but the concessions will not stop at that.

The U.S. will ask Iraq to abandon its support of the Palestinians and the PLO, "a source close to the

political observers in Baghdad expected Dr. Hammadi, who is considered the chief ideologue of the ruling Baath party, to play a key role in the cabinet that the Iraqi president has promised to form, probably as prime minister.

The other serious challenge that the leadership is facing is how to accommodate the growing internal discontent. According to officials, the leadership has three priorities: First, the quelling of unrest and violence in the northern Kurdish areas and in other parts in the south. Second, the restoration to normality of the PLO, "a source close to the

international community.

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international community.

Officials argue that the first objective is crucial to restoration of normal life and production and to the democratisation process.

Some analysts, however, warn that the use of force and the army might further erode the leadership's credibility concerning its commitment to liberal change.

"It is a very sensitive equation.

But how can the government function if it does not stop armed

conflict and well-informed

source.

The only alternative for the Iraqi leadership, official sources agree, is to immediately start the process of change by appointing credible figures and efficient technocrats to the new proposed government.

The changes are also expected to end the supremacy and the monopoly of the Revolutionary Command Council, which will be dissolved, giving more power to the executive branch. But even though President Saddam is expected to appoint a prime minister — so far he has been the de facto prime minister — the extent of independence of the executive branch from his person is debatable and unclear.

Another vague point concerns political parties. In his speech the Iraqi President said that political parties will be allowed but did not clarify if that will include the exiled opposition groups. Some Iraqi political analysts believe that he might be able to pull the carpet from under the feet of the opposition groups by inviting them to start a new era of political pluralism in Iraq.

Iraq accuses Iran of inciting rebellion

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ ACCUSED Iran Wednesday of inciting the rebellion that has left southern cities in ruins and parts of the oil-rich north reportedly in the hands of Kurdish guerrillas.

Meanwhile, an Iraqi SU-22 fighter that U.S. military officials said was violating the ceasefire

was shot down by an American F-15C jet fighter near Tikrit (see story below).

Kurdish guerrillas claimed Iraq used warplanes and helicopter gunships to attack rebels who seized Kirkuk, the key northern oil center during intensive street fighting Wednesday.

Iraq's official Islamic Republic News Agency, citing reports from

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Americans shoot down Iraqi jet

DHAHRAN (Agencies) — An American jet fighter shot down an Iraqi warplane near President Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit in central Iraq Wednesday, a U.S. central command spokesman said.

It was the first conflict between U.S. and Iraqi forces since President George Bush ordered a ceasefire Feb. 28, apart from early skirmishes involving Iraqi who apparently did not know the truce had been called.

U.S. officials said the incident did not represent a resumption of the war.

Lieutenant Commander David Knox said the jet fighter was one

of two planes detected by an AWACS early warning plane.

The other Iraqi fighter "landed on its own after the engagement," Cmdr. Knox said.

He said a U.S. air force F-15C jet fighter shot down the Iraqi Su-22 at about 1:15 p.m. (1050 GMT) in the vicinity of Tikrit, 175 kilometers north of Baghdad.

In Washington, presidential spokesman Martin Fitzwater said the fighter was flying over Iraq in violation of the conditions set by the temporary ceasefire agreement in the Gulf war.

But Mr. Fitzwater added:

Lieutenant Commander David Knox said the jet fighter was one

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Geagea quits cabinet; defence chief escapes blast, but 8 killed

BEIRUT (R) — Milia warlord Samir Geagea resigned from Lebanon's national unity government Wednesday and was replaced by a close aide.

Milia sources said a major reason for Mr. Geagea's resignation was his concern for his security. Shortly before the meeting, Defence Minister Michael Murr narrowly escaped assassination in a car-bomb blast which killed at least eight people.

We have now approved the resignation of Doctor Samir Geagea and have appointed His Excellency Roger Dib as new minister of state," Prime Minister Omar Karami told reporters be-

fore the cabinet meeting.

A car-bomb wrecked Mr. Murr's convoy as he was being driven from his village in north Lebanon to the cabinet meeting in the western sector of Beirut.

Murr only suffered bruises from the blast but at least eight people were killed and 25 wounded, security sources said.

Murr, a Greek Orthodox

(Continued on page 5)

Yugoslav crisis drags on

BELGRADE (Agencies) —

Yugoslavia's president, who quit last week, Wednesday accused ethnic rivals in the leadership of fueling the country's crisis and blocking army moves to head off civil war.

Borislav Jovic, who resigned last Friday, told the parliament of his native republic, Serbia, that separatist forces in secessionist Croatia and Slovenia were to blame for Yugoslavia's worst front since World War II.

"Separatist forces have abused democracy to break up the country and its legal institutions," Mr. Jovic told a session of the Serbian parliament called to consider his

resignation.

"The destructive practice, which we are not able to stop effectively, threatens to lead to the break-up of the country, to catastrophic inter-ethnic conflicts and civil war."

Mr. Jovic's resignation triggered a string of departures from the collective presidency which has paralysed the country's highest constitutional body as it confronts massive upheaval.

In a fiery speech, Mr. Jovic, a communist, asked Serbia's communist-dominated parliament to accept his resignation. But to thunderous applause, deputies implored him to recon-

No normalisation with Israel without solution to Palestinian problem — foreign minister

By Salameh Ne'matt
Special to the *Jordan Times*

AMMAN — Jordan warned Wednesday against American attempts to ignore the crux of the Arab-Israeli conflict through seeking a normalisation of Israeli-Arab relations instead of dealing with the Palestinian problem.

In a joint interview with the *Jordan Times* and the London-based *Al Hayat* newspaper, Mr. Masri said the Kingdom "will not accept a normalisation of relations with Israel before solving the Palestinian problem."

He explained that Arab states had "no deep and serious conflict with Israel except that which is related to Palestinian problem."

Commenting on the U.S.-Israeli pronounced goals of "con-

fidence building" leading to normalisation of Arab-Israeli relations, Mr. Masri said: "We do not think that this is the right beginning, and we do not think that Israeli talks with the Palestinians without Arab umbrella and international auspices can achieve the rights of the Palestinian people."

Renewing the Jordanian call for convening an international Middle East peace conference, Mr. Masri said the Kingdom "will not accept a normalisation of relations with Israel before solving the Palestinian problem."

He said the United States will achieve nothing from its current efforts.

Mr. Masri pointed out that of Syria, was "very important in terms of discouraging the American approach supported by

Israel."

He expressed confidence that Syria "will not accept the dilution of the Palestinian problem."

The foreign minister, who left Wednesday on a tour of Arab states (see story below), said Jordan would continue contacts towards enhancing inter-Arab cooperation.

He stressed the importance of "rejecting the division of the Arab World into two camps and working towards reviving joint Arab action, at least vis-a-vis the Palestinian problem."

He said the Arab World was now divided into two camps with the Gulf Cooperation Council, Syria and Egypt on one side and the remaining Arab states on the other.

Mr. Masri said he expected

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U.S. Senate cuts off aid to Jordan

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate voted Wednesday to cut off U.S. military and economic aid to Jordan.

The provision, opposed by President George Bush, would rescind the \$20 million in military assistance and \$35 million in economic aid to the Kingdom due to receive this year.

The action came as the Senate worked on legislation to spend \$650 million in war aid for Israel and \$200 million for Turkey.

The Senate cut off aid to Jordan in a voice vote. An earlier effort to continue aiding Jordan was rejected, 57 to 43.

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President George Bush, would rescind the \$20 million in military assistance and \$35 million in economic aid to the Kingdom due to receive this year.

The minister will explore prospects of inter-Arab cooperation in the post-Gulf war phase and ahead of the Cairo meeting," said a senior official.

Included in Mr. Masri's visit are Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Mauritania, which, along with Libya, make up the AMU — an economic and political

grouping of North African Arab states — and Sudan, Yemen and Syria, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

"The minister will discuss current Arab affairs, Arab solidarity and collective Arab action in preparation for the 95th meeting of the Arab League Council (in Cairo)," Petra quoted a Foreign Ministry spokesman as saying.

All AMU members (except Morocco) as well as Sudan and Yemen stayed away from joining the American-led anti-Iraq coalition and repeatedly called for an inter-Arab solution to the crisis sparked by Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

Syria and Morocco contributed troops to the coalition, but</p

Kuwait government resigns after widespread criticism

KUWAIT (Agencies) — Kuwait's government has resigned following public anger over its failure to restore power and other essential services in the war-ravaged emirate. Planning Minister Suleiman Al Mutawa said Wednesday.

"The government has resigned. Yesterday in the cabinet meeting, the prime minister said he intends to submit the resignations of the government to His Highness the Emir," Mr. Mutawa said.

There is still no power or running water three weeks after Iraq's armies left Kuwait. Much of the emirate is blanketed by dense smoke from more than 500 oil wells allegedly set on fire by the Iraqis.

Iraqi troops allegedly blew up Kuwait's power stations and water desalination plants.

Mr. Mutawa acknowledged there was public dissatisfaction over government's failure to restore public services.

"People are afraid of the dark and there are two types of darkness — the darkness at noon (caused by burning oil wells) and the darkness because of the lack of electricity," he said.

"I think it was quite apparent that all the people talked about the lack of services. They said to us 'what have you been doing for the last seven months,'" he told reporters.

The start last weekend of the holy month of Ramadan had aggravated dissatisfaction because Kuwaitis had difficulty visiting and there was scarcely enough food, he said.

A senior opposition leader, Abdulla Nubari, said Tuesday the government was so incompetent that after seven months of planning in exile in Saudi Arabia, it had not even managed to bring electricity managers into the country on its return.

In an interview with Reuters, Mr. Nubari said Kuwait must end the system where key cabinet posts were reserved for members of the ruling family, "even if they are good for nothing like the minister of the defence, (Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah), or the minister of the interior, (Sheikh Salem Al Sabah)."

Mr. Mutawa said the premier, Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Al Abdulla Al Sabah, would form a

new government to tackle the problems of rebuilding Kuwait. It would be up to Sheikh Saad whether some opposition figures were included.

Mr. Mutawa said the cabinet's resignation should not affect Kuwait's move towards democracy and should help defend criticism of the restored ruling Sabah family.

The cabinet members most criticised by the public are the defence and interior ministers, Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah and Minister of Electricity and Water Hamoud Al Raqa.

Mr. Mutawa declined to say whether these four ministers would be dropped but added: "Obviously, assuming there is new thinking, you need new thinkers."

The government's resignation was one demand of an opposition movement campaigning for a rapid move to parliamentary democracy.

On Tuesday the government suspended publication of the only daily newspaper being printed in Kuwait after it called for a new administration.

The paper, named Feb. 26 after the day Iraq left Kuwait, said the government had proved incompetent and a new administration was needed to rebuild Kuwait morally and materially.

Kuwait's U.N. ambassador Mohammad Al Bulhans Wednesday described the resignation as: "A normal move during a martial law situation..."

Asked whether the cabinet resignation was in response to demands by some Kuwaitis for more democracy, he told Reuters, "Oh no. This is a very routine thing."

Mr. Mutawa asserted the Iraqis had sabotaged public services in a way calculated to make it difficult for any Kuwaiti government to rule.

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Crown Prince marks birthday



AMMAN (J.T.) — Wednesday March 20 marked the 44th birthday of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

Born in Amman in 1947, Prince Hassan is the youngest brother of His Majesty King Hussein and heir to the throne.

He played an active role in the development process in Jordan and focused his efforts on pursuing development by encouraging public participation in the

decision-making process.

Prince Hassan, who was made Crown Prince in 1965, has contributed to the institution building process and to creating the framework which serves development efforts.

The Palestine question has always been on top of his agenda and for this reason he has studied many topics involving the Palestine question.

Prince Hassan was behind the

formation of the Arab Thought Forum, and is the chairman of its board of trustees, and the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research. He also chairs with Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Rights, which was established in 1983.

Prince Hassan is currently on a private visit to Britain in the course of a tour which will also take him to Canada and the United States.

In his visit to Britain, Prince Hassan met Monday with British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd for talks on the political situation in the Middle East region and efforts to ensure stability, security and peace as well as issues of common concern to Jordan and the United Kingdom.

The Crown Prince Sunday delivered an address at Oxford University and dwelt on the need for the world community to work towards ensuring food security and on the consequences of the Gulf war on the countries of the region.

Prince Hassan will visit Ottawa and San Francisco where he will address a conference that would discuss options for security, cooperation and development in the Middle East in the post-war era.



KING HOSTSIFTAR: His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday hosted an iftar banquet at Basman Palace for Prime Minister Mudar Badran, the ministers, Upper House of Parliament speaker and members, former prime ministers, ambassadors of Arab and Muslim countries in Amman and senior Muslim and Christian clergymen. The banquet was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of His Majesty King Hussein, several members of the Royal Hashemite Family, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and Chief Chamberlain Prince Raad Ben Zeid. King Hussein and the guests performed Al Maghreb prayers together.

Strike at University Hospital postponed

By Odeh Odeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A three-hour work stoppage by doctors and nurses at the Jordan University Hospital, which was due to have been held Wednesday, was postponed until Saturday to allow for more time for discussions on the strikers' demands and a possible settlement with the management.

This was announced by a committee formed by the 100 doctors and specialists and 400 male and female nurses who are taking the action to back demands for improved working and pay conditions.

The strikers are protesting a management decision to reduce their salaries and to deny them the daily free meals they used to have, according to the committee members who spoke on behalf of their group.

"Due to mediation in the dispute on the part of Parliament members Fares Nabulsi, Mohammad Tarawneh, Husni Shiyab and Issa Madanat, the committee has decided to postpone the work stoppage until Saturday because the deputies will take up the matter themselves with the hospital management," the committee said in a statement Wednesday noon.

But a committee spokesman insisted that the strikers' demands were just and fair, and they were adhering to them "at all costs."

The committee repeated that the strikers were demanding that the management stop threatening the doctors and nurses with dismissals, that the management renew the doctors' and nurses' contracts and that free meals continue for all members of the staff.

A spokesman for the management said however that the hospital has a JD 1.58 million deficit and is in no position to give in to these demands. But the spokesman expressed the management's

willingness to pursue a dialogue with the doctors and nurses without foreign intervention.

According to the committee, doctors who used to receive JD 235 in monthly salary have had their pay reduced to JD 175 over the past two years.

The management maintains that the hospital was having a deficit in its JD 15 million annual budget, largely due to the fact that most of the patients, referred to the hospital by the government health centres, pay only five percent of the total cost of the treatment and the government covers the rest of the cost. It said that the doctors and nurses are called on to make some sacrifice and to cooperate with the management so that the institution can overcome the present difficulties.

The hospital, which serves as a training hospital for students of pharmacy, medicine and dentistry at the University of Jordan, is in need of assistance from the government which only paid the hospital JD 3 million in grants to help it deal with the situation, the spokesman said.

The 500 strikers Monday staged a brief sit-in at the hospital, in protest against the management's rejection of their demands, and warned that the strike would be inevitable if the demands go unheeded.

The strikers' action has been supported by the professional unions, notably by the Jordan Medical Association (JMA).

Association President Mamoud Al Abbadi said that the demands were just and should be met.

Mr. Abbadi was present at a meeting late Tuesday before the decision to postpone the work stoppage was taken.

The committee's decision to postpone the strike was taken after a meeting Wednesday with Minister of Higher Education Said Al Tal, the University president, and the hospital management.

Amman airport activity returning to normal

By Debbie Lovatt
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Activity at Queen Alia International Airport (QAIA) is gradually returning to normal now that the Gulf war is over.

Crippled by high war insurance costs and a sharp fall in trade to tourists and business people stopped or curtailed travel to and from the Middle East, many airlines were forced to cancel their flights to Jordan.

Royal Jordanian (RJ) and the Soviet airline, Aeroflot, were the only airlines to maintain flights in and out of Jordan during the Gulf war.

With the war over and with the approach of the tourist season other airlines are resuming flights. The airlines that have not yet returned are expected to do so after Ramadan.

The airport not working at its pre-Gulf crisis capacity "has nothing to do with being in a war zone or high insurance premiums. Simply there just aren't enough passengers," explained Mr. Akef Biltaji, executive vice-president of passenger services, at QAIA.

RJ cut down on staff at its offices in the United States and in Europe during the Gulf war, but retained all staff based in Jordan. "If we pick up we will take it from

there," said Mr. Biltaji referring to the restaffing of the affected offices outside Jordan.

During the 42-day war QAIA was used by relief organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, which sent humanitarian aid to the people of Iraq.

Every sector of the Jordanian economy was adversely affected by the Gulf crisis and war, but the loss in tourism is perhaps the most visible one.

"There is no reason why tourism should not pick up again," said Mr. Biltaji. "If the country wants to get back on its feet the industry available for this is tourism and its related industries — such as hotels and transport," he continued.

"RJ is using the present lax period for 'restructuring the company, the fleet, reviewing objectives, reassessing destinations and strategies,' said Mr. Biltaji.

Mr. Biltaji explained that at the moment RJ is "operating with an apparent margin of debt" due to the expense of maintaining a regular service under the heavy burden of increased war insurance premiums throughout the period of aggression.

Mr. Biltaji expressed optimism that through tourism this "margin of debt" situation will be reversed. "The potential is great," he said.

According to the minister's statement, the following profes-

TCC adopts harsh measures against defaulting subscribers

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) has collected JD 6 million in dues from telephone subscribers with in the Greater Amman Municipality since the start of a collection campaign on March 2, and is now transferring the sums to the Ministry of Finance in conformity with normal procedures, according to Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Jamal Al Sarateh.

The TCC said that in this matter with the TCC management.

The TCC was about to take very strict measures in order to ensure the collection of its dues from the subscribers through legal procedures which could cause inconvenience to members of the public.

The TCC said at the start of the campaign that subscribers' dues in the Amman Governorate amounted to nearly JD 11 million, and that a similar campaign would be launched in the other governorates of the Kingdom after Eid Al Fitr feast next month.

Mr. Sarateh said that the TCC was offering subscribers with large amounts of dues to pay them the chance to pay them in instalments, from now and until the end of the fiscal year, and he

called on them to make arrangements in this matter with the TCC.

When the TCC made the announcement about the campaign it said it would be carried out in four weeks, each week for a different zone of the capital and its suburbs.

The campaign is normally conducted every three months so that the TCC could collect the dues and meet its financial obligations, which are normally settled in hard currency, according to Ahmad Munis, deputy director of the TCC's finance department.

Mr. Munis said that the TCC was contemplating the idea of halting this practice and demanding that the bills be settled on a monthly basis like the electricity bill, with the subscribers risking having their telephone lines cut without prior warning if they fail to settle their dues in time.

Jordan, Iraq seek to resume microwave links

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The telecommunications corporations of Jordan and Iraq are in contact for resuming microwave links between the two countries, but adjoining small buildings which house related equipment have been totally smashed. Some of the steel structures resemble the leaning tower of Pisa.

Officials point out that Iraq had some of the best communications systems in the Middle East although they were never used to their full potential in view of the security situation during the eight years of war with Iran and the no-war-no-peace situation on the front until August 1990. The situation remained static with the Iraqis invading Kuwait in early August to the extent that "some of the equipment and systems were never tested for optimum purposes," said an industry expert, offering an explanation to the erratic communications with Iraq even during peacetime despite the availability of sophisticated infrastructure.

In the meantime, "there is no communication between Jordan and Iraq, at least not on the civilian side," added the official. "We hope to have a fair picture of the situation soon on the state of Iraqi facilities," he said.

Telecommunication facilities in Iraq, notably in Baghdad, are among the worst hit in the allied air assault which began Jan. 17. Several satellite centres in the Iraqi capital have been repeatedly hit, some of them seven or eight times. Indicative of the allied objective of total destruction is the view of a seven-storyed building in the heart of the Iraqi capital. Every floor of the building appeared to have been systematically targeted, leaving a steel and concrete hole with millions of cables hanging loose.

The strikers' action has been supported by the professional unions, notably by the Jordan Medical Association (JMA).

Association President Mamoud Al Abbadi said that the demands were just and should be met.

Mr. Abbadi was present at a meeting late Tuesday before the decision to postpone the work stoppage was taken.

The committee's decision to postpone the strike was taken after a meeting Wednesday with Minister of Higher Education Said Al Tal, the University president, and the hospital management.

"These are complete write-offs. There is no way anything could be salvaged from the wreckage," according to an Iraqi Information Ministry official who took reporters on a tour of installations damaged in the bombing.

"We have to start from scratch," he added.

Every communication tower and ground facility between

Baghdad and Trebeil, on the border with Jordan, has been destroyed; in some cases, the tall steel towers with the satellite dish are still standing in the middle of the desert, but adjoining small buildings which house related equipment have been totally smashed. Some of the steel structures resemble the leaning tower of Pisa.

"We have agreed to the request, and we are ready when the Iraqis are," added Dr. Jazi.

Iraq's postal system had been partially active until the outbreak of the war. Iraqi Airways used to operate one daily regular flight to Amman until the morning of Jan. 17, when the allied blitzkrieg rendered Baghdad airport inoperative.

Kuwaiti communications

The Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) said meanwhile that calls had been coming into Jordan from Kuwait through satellite facilities set up in the emirate after the end of the Gulf war.

"People in Jordan can receive calls from Kuwait but not vice-versa," said TCC Director-General Mohammad Shahid Ismail. The system is set up by the American AT&T through its satellite facilities, he said.

"They have established ground facilities with dishes which are hooked up with the AT&T satellite, and this allows them to make calls outside," he told the Jordan Times. But the system does not allow calls into Kuwait from outside pending repair to Kuwait's own telecommunication facilities," he added.

The Kuwaiti authorities have not approached Jordan to fix its side of telecommunications with the emirate.

According to one Jordanian who received a call from his sister in Kuwait City on March 9, more than one week after the allied forces entered the emirate following Iraq's withdrawal, AT&T has set up several "public call" booths around the city and people are allowed calls outside upon the discretion of Kuwaiti militiamen."

Postal services

Meanwhile, moves are under way for Jordan's postal services to facilitate the flow of Iraqi mail through the Kingdom.

"We expect to begin the service in a few days' time," said Dr. Abdallah Jazi, head of the Post and Postal Savings Corporation of Jordan. "The Iraqis have requested us to handle the mail, which will be sent to Jordan

Ministry issues list of jobs for non-Jordanians

AMMAN (J.T.) — Following up on a campaign which started Monday in Jordan to crack down on thousands of illegal foreign workers, Labour Minister Abdul Karim Al Dughmi Wednesday issued a set of regulations defining types of jobs for which non-Jordanians can be employed.

"In applying the regulations to an estimated 170,000 foreign workers, mostly Egyptians and Syrians, the Labour Ministry is merely enforcing the Jordanian labour law and trying to find work for the unemployed Jordanian citizens," said the minister in a statement.

"From now on the government will not allow the employment of any foreigner if Jordanian substitutes are available; if foreign workers are needed, work permits against current fees must be obtained from the ministry or its various offices around the country," the minister pointed out.

"In case a non-Jordanian has been allowed to work in the country, he can by no means change his job and no new permit will be issued for him, while the ministry inspection teams will be instructed to ensure that the instructions are respected," the minister added.

According to the minister's statement, the following profes-

sions are to be taken up only by Jordanians: Doctors, engineers, accountants, clerks in offices, workers as typists, telex operators or secretaries, telephone operators, warehouse watchmen or workers, salesmen, decorators, attendants at petrol stations, nightwatchmen, messengers, teachers, hair dressers, butchers, car maintenance workers, mechanics, car body repairmen and car electricians. Non-Jordanians are free to apply for any of them directly or through their employers.

The minister said that non-Jordanians could be employed as cleaners working for the Greater Amman Municipality or other municipalities, cleaners at hospitals, workers at car wash stations, technicians at bakeries but not as bread sellers in the bakeries, house maids, porters and farm workers.

Normally non-Arab workers employed in the country pay JD 300 as an annual fee for the work permits, while non-Jordanian Arab workers pay JD 100, except for nurses and farm workers who pay only JD 30.

Last Monday Mr. Dughmi said in a statement that a survey conducted by ministry teams revealed that 6,000 non-Jordanian workers have been working for years in bakeries, most without work permits, and are indebted to the treasury JD 2 million.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King visits army headquarters

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein, the supreme commander of the Jordanian Armed Forces, Wednesday visited the Armed Forces headquarters where he was received by Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Fathi Abu Taleb, his assistants and the inspector general. King Hussein met with Abu Taleb and discussed with him issues of concern to the Armed Forces.

Abu Taleb thanks for donations

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordanian Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Fathi Abu Taleb Wednesday sent a letter to Yarmouk University President Ali Mahafza to thank him for the university's JD 4,721 contribution to the People's Army. Abu Taleb sent a similar letter to the Finance Ministry's employees for donating JD 3,628 to the People's Army.

Stop maltreatment of Jordanians — Qawar

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy Fakhri Qawar, president of the Jordanian Writers Association, Wednesday appealed to official and public institutions and establishments in Jordan, the Arab states and the world to intervene and stop the killing, maltreatment and torture of Jordanians and Palestinians living in Kuwait. Mr. Qawar, who voiced his condemnation of the crimes committed in Kuwait against Jordanians and Palestinians, also appealed to Arab writers' associations and to all the democratic and national powers in the Arab World to shoulder their role in defending the Egyptian poet Mohammad Afifi Matar who was arrested by the Egyptian authorities recently.

Jordan free of bilharzia

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan is free of bilharzia and the 1,539 persons infected by the disease over the past years have all been cured, according to Mr. Mohammad Rida Tawfiq, head of the Malaria and Bilharzia department at the Ministry of Health.

Dr. Tawfiq said that health workers had been active at water locations, springs and canals, including the King Abdullah Canal in the Jordan Valley and the King Talal and Wadi Sheib dams among other places, conducting inspection, collecting blood samples and pursuing efforts to rid the country of the disease.

A total of 37,324 samples were taken from non-Jordanian workers arriving in the country in the past year, and the Ministry of Health offered treatment to those infected free of charge in a bid to eradicate the disease, he said.

All non-Jordanians arriving to work here are subjected to medical examination to determine that they are not infected.

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Trump in Arab hands

JORDAN MAY have not liked being bypassed by the U.S. secretary of state, James Baker, during his recent swing in the area, but we should not be that disappointed by the exclusion either. The timing was not propitious for a visit by a senior American official so soon after the war, even though he would have been assured of safety and cordial reception had he decided to come. What Jordan is disappointed with, however, is this new, two-track approach that the Americans seem to be moving along these days. We in Jordan, like the French, the Soviets and some other major players, want the U.N. to call for the holding of an international conference to tackle the Arab-Israeli conflict and its core problem, the statelessness and dispossession of the Palestinian people, simultaneously and directly. True, we may not be ruling out any other useful approach, but there appears to be little sense and value in adopting the two-track method whose outline is enshrined in the Shamir plan of May 14, 1989.

Jordanians, on principle, are unhappy about the limitations of the plan and its viability, and unhappy still that the Americans have so far elected to appease the Israelis at the expense of the collective work by the U.N. that the U.S. started and favoured in the Gulf crisis. Besides, if peace talks were confined to Israel and only those Arab members of the coalition — even if they eventually included Jordan and the Palestinians — they would be narrowly based. In other words, we believe that all concerned parties have to be brought in. And the only obvious way in which that can happen is through Arab reconciliation first and a more comprehensive peace process which involves the U.N. and the five permanent members of the Security Council at a later stage.

President Bush showed understanding of this position when he noted in a recent interview (March 6) that he had "no rancour or bitterness (towards Jordan)" and said he would "let the Arabs work their magic out here." "Let's have — you're talking about an Arab solution," he told Arab journalists who spoke to him in that interview. "Let them (Arab leaders) come to me and say... all of them, including Jordan... here's the way we ought to work together."

But whether the Arabs can work it out among ourselves is another question. Jordan at least will be trying. It is to send a representative to the Arab League Council which will be meeting in Cairo on March 30, and plans to take an active part in the discussions that will include a host of issues, including the Palestinian problem.

The truly bleak side, as far as Jordan is concerned, is that Iraq continues to bleed while all attention (not necessarily resources) is focused on the political jockeying to tackle the Palestinian problem, while the Saudis and most of their Gulf partners continue to shun the Kingdom, and while the anti-coalition Arab side remains fragmented, unable even to meet to present a front or a common position.

We know it will be some time before the Arabs can clear the air from the fallout of the Gulf crisis, and even longer to come up with one plan like that of the Fez Summit which the Arab leaders presented to Ronald Reagan in 1982.

Based on this and other factors, then, and despite private American assurances that Bush is not Reagan when it comes to the Middle East, we cannot afford to be over-optimistic. Israel's government still rejects, as it did back in 1982, the land-for-peace formula and insists on a veto not only over the other side's negotiations but also on the Palestinian representatives with whom the U.S. might mediate.

But we know equally well that something has to happen before George Bush gets bogged down in his second presidential campaign starting early 1992. The signs are that Jordan will keep trying.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

JORDANIAN dailies Wednesday discussed the plight of Jordanians and Palestinians living in Kuwait and the inhuman treatment inflicted on them by the Kuwaiti military and para-military groups. Al Rai for its part, said that the horrific reports from Kuwait about torture and killing of Palestinians and Jordanians indicate that the Kuwaitis are now pursuing a racist policy, persecuting other nationalities who had served their country for generations. By mistreating the other Arabs in Kuwait, the Kuwaiti people can never hope to find their way to establish themselves as part of the Arab Nation, and by allowing the murderers to roam the streets and districts of Kuwait; pillaging and killing and committing all sorts of atrocities, the Kuwaiti government can never consolidate its hold over the country, the paper said. Torture, killing, rape and deportation among other atrocities which are rife in Kuwait now, can only contribute towards deepening the rifts among Arabs and increasing the amount of hatred and malice in the hearts of millions of people, said the paper. Jordanians and Palestinians now exposed to torture and abuse remained in Kuwait when the Kuwaitis and other nationalities fled; and they had offered service to the country for which they indeed deserve respect and appreciation, not inhuman treatment and eviction, the paper said. It is most distressing to see our brothers and sisters being exposed to atrocities at a time when Western powers who had been haranguing about respect of human rights and protection of the minorities doing nothing to address the situation, the paper added. These foreign powers, it said, have a moral responsibility towards the population since they continue to occupy Kuwait and parts of Iraq, and since they continue to dominate the affairs of the Gulf area.

With due respect the Jordanian government's decision to participate in the coming Cairo meeting of the Arab League, we see no point of attending it, because the Arab League which we used to know no more exists, says a columnist in Al Rai's daily. Tareq Masa'weh reminds his readers of the recent meeting held by eight Arab countries plus the United States which resulted in a political programme for the Arab countries in the post-war era, noting that the meeting was held in the absence of the majority of the Arab states and at a time when Iraq was still dressing the wounds of the Gulf war. The writer notes that the United States is determined to impose on the Arab Nation an Israeli pre-set formula for ending the Arab-Israeli conflict and settling the Palestine question as well as ending the Arab states boycott of Israeli goods. What Washington is trying to do, is to impose on the Arabs its own ideas which it has already passed on to the eight Arab states, and is trying to deal with the Palestine question out of context of the U.N. Security Council resolutions, and wants the Arabs to approve of its ideas at an Arab League meeting. Masa'weh points out:

Jordan press vs. Mr. Bush: Charge sheet's unsettled

By George Hawatmeh

THE U.S. president, twice in the course of the week that followed the war end on March 3, found it necessary to criticise the Jordanian press. In the first instance, he complained that the Jordanians were misinformed (by their press that is) of the size of the military defeat Iraq had suffered at the hands of the Americans and their military partners. In the second attack (interview with several Arab journalists on March 8), President Bush turned the heat up a little. He had this to say about Jordanian newspapers: "I am disappointed with some of the Jordan press. Frankly, that did nothing but blame everything on the United States. They know better than that. And yet they did it."

In reaction to the president's two in a row, some Jordanian journalists were amused. Others savoured the attention. But the majority disagreed with his premise that they misled their readers on the actual outcome of the war. Jordanians are still not sure about that to this date, even though they get their information from all sorts of international media organs, not just from their dailies at home.

While it is true that our newspapers, and at a much later stage television and radio, totally supported Iraq in the Gulf crisis and the war that followed, it is doubtful whether this support is alone responsible for the pro-Iraq stance that Jordan took since Aug. 2, or for whatever

This in fact might partly ex-

plain why the U.S. president, in his interview with the Arab journalists, absolved the King of the sole responsibility for swinging "way over (to Iraq) on this question." He said: "I am not saying it was all his (the King's) fault because there were some people out there in the streets... and they are still out there yelling about me, personally, and the whole United States... obviously I'm

just this target for that." The U.S. president mentioned neither the government's nor parliament's role in shaping his perceptions of Jordanian attitudes.

But by the "people in the streets," Mr. Bush probably meant the Arab masses, whose conscience the Jordanians (journalists included) claimed to represent and whose wrath the

U.S. president may have tried to escape. Many journalists here believe that this is the real reason behind his attack on the Jordanian press which, according to him, was "misinforming" people. It is of course possible that he was trying to make a scapegoat of the Jordanian press for what many journalists saw as his quarrel with the Arab people despite his repeated denials.

There are people in Jordan who indeed share the belief that the press overdid it. Loss of objectivity occurred. One sidedness prevailed. Jingoism was expressed. Signs of enmity and hatred towards the U.S.-led West surfaced. But, typically, journalists have been quick and ready to counter such charges. Was the Western media itself objective? Were the spokesmen for the coalition forces telling the truth? Did not banner headlines in American and European newspapers call for "nuking 'em (the Iraqis)?" Did not Americans and Europeans bate and despise free and defiant Arabs? Was it not President Bush who personally wanted war in the Gulf and ordered it? Did they not (coalition forces) destroy and devastate a fellow Arab, Muslim country and killed tens of thousands of its people, some of them in civilian shelters and others caught withdrawing defenselessly from Kuwait?

Micro-analysis of headlines is a continuing process in Jordan. Many laymen have literally overnight become media experts. And newspapers editors have simultaneously come under pressure from above the below.

President Bush is of course entitled to say what he wants about us. But if history is not mostly guessing and the rest is not prejudice, it will prove that we did what we could, and the Americans were not a fair game either in all of this.

The debate goes on.



Self-help is the first step for Palestinians

By Edward Said

AS IRAQ endures paroxysms of disintegration and suffering, a solution to the question of Palestine has been brought back on the scene, with an amazingly durable cast of the usual suspects trying to appear different and more effective than before.

Let them try by all means, but let them approach matters honestly. For it is also true that large numbers of Palestinians — essentially unarmed and unprotected — have been made even more dramatically vulnerable today. Consider that West Bank and Gaza Palestinians are presided over by far-right, essentially fundamentalist Israeli cabinet comprising two members with significant responsibility for the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacres in Lebanon. Pogroms against Palestinians have begun in Kuwait, where an indefinite martial law is likely to entail mass deportations, internment camps, and an even less enviable status for an unjustly scapegoated people with nowhere else to go.

And still the search for "acceptable" Palestinian representatives continues, a grotesque and time-wasting effort if there ever was one. Everyone knows exactly who represents

native Palestinians are. Yet a few days ago the Saudi and Kuwaiti foreign ministers chose to go to Damascus to meet the Palestinian dissidents maintained by Syria as a goad to Yasser Arafat, and who represent no significant number of their compatriots. The Gulf effort is quite simply to try to bleed, confuse and divide this long-suffering and dispossessed nation even further. The Gulf potentates speak in terms of reasonable moderation to their American patrons, yet they finance Hamas, the West Bank-Gaza Islamic activists, who, to evident Israeli satisfaction, proclaim the destruction of Israel as their goal. (Iraq used also to give money to Hamas). With a few exceptions, the Israeli peace movement has waltzed sanctimoniously off the scene, its excuse being Palestinian support for Iraq, if the condition of Palestinians under Israeli military occupation had been something to be envied before the Gulf war.

So the Palestinian tragedy continues, with murder and hypocrisy exacting a dreadful price from students who have no schools or universities, men and women who have little food, no jobs, no political rights, no certainty of life, residence, or even subsistence nourishment and water.

What could be more disheartening than for the superpower that has destroyed Iraq as a functioning country, all the while proclaiming a U.N. mandate for its actions, now to send its Secretary of State around the Middle East to "consult" with its various clients on what to do about the Palestinians — even as Security Council Resolution 681, which was passed unanimously on 20 December 1990, "goes unheeded, unimplemented, unrecalled. According to that resolution (blocked for a month by the United States) the U.N. was supposed actively to protect Palestinians from brazen violations of the Geneva conventions by Israel. Nothing has changed, except that Israel continues the violations and has been given an additional \$750 million to settle many Russian Jews on Palestinian land.

Such immorality is breathtaking. What Palestinians suffered at the hands of Israel, the U.S. and the Arab states came well before what PLO leaders are now being preached at for having said during the Gulf crisis (which was certainly often wrong and embarrassingly silly). Arab support for Palestinian self-determination (as the history of the Gulf attest) was always the result of popular pressure on the rulers, and not out of their goodness of heart. The Egyptian president is acting as he does mainly because he wants Arab legitimacy to dress up his domestically unpopular American-Saudi stand against Iraq.

To look past the hypocrisy that clogs the scene is to realise that the main hope for any serious Palestinian resolution cannot be in a "Pan American" brokered by dithering enemies of the Palestinian people, but in a renewed all-Palestinian effort to take the case directly in band.

On the minus side, the odds against success are obviously staggering, with widespread dispersion and economic hardship likely to be much greater than ever. On the plus side, a plain linkage (there all along, of course) that exists between the occupations of Kuwait and Palestine; in addition there is the resilience and unconquerable will of the people themselves; and last, there is a solid world consensus on behalf of Palestinian rights.

What to do? Here are the proposals of a non-expert but independent and committed Palestinian partisan:

1. A return to the ways and means of the past is unconscionable. Therefore Palesti-

nians should be the first to describe things as they are, without pulling their punches. The situation is not only bleak, it is terrible. There is hope, but only Palestinians can articulate their vision creatively and only they can say if it is being realised. It requires accountability and seriousness of purpose from both leaders and people alike.

2. A provisional government or government-in-exile has to be formed by and for the Palestinian people, under U.N. auspices. An agreement with Israel and with Jordan for a form of independence acceptable to the residents of the West Bank and Gaza must be directly negotiated, and must be validated right away by the PLO. The basis should be U.N. Resolutions 242, 338, and 181 (partition), according to the terms of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) Resolutions of November 1988.

These present and peacefully accommodating terms have never been repudiated or modified, as few commentators seem to recall.

3. The situation of Palestinian exile populations has to be normalised, by giving people options for compensation, citizenship, or, if at all possible, repatriation. Here the terms of the Geneva conven-

Baker outlines American policies in wake of Gulf war

The following article by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker is reprinted from the March 13 issue of *The Times of London*.

THE war in the Gulf finished quickly — more quickly than most observers predicted. The first part of the international community's task in the Middle East has therefore been accomplished. Kuwait is free, the legitimate government has been restored. Making sense of the peace will be as important as winning the war, but nobody should expect dramatic breakthrough to match the spectacular success of allied forces in the Arabian desert. Resistance to the necessary changes in the Middle East is not going to collapse as satisfactorily as the resistance of the Iraqi Republican Guard. But we have to be as determined and skilful as we can in bringing stability and order to a notoriously troubled part of the world.

The world in general and the Middle East in particular look different now. The U.N. has responded effectively to a challenge to collective security, the first time in its history when one member state had been swallowed by another. The military machine in Iraq has suffered a shattering defeat. Most of its neighbours took a part in that defeat. Turkey and Jordan applied sanctions at great cost to themselves; Syria and Iran were active and responsible. The international coalition led by the U.S.

and the Soviet Union. There are already suppliers' clubs for weapons of mass destruction. Their rules try to prevent proliferation through controls on the export of relevant technology. We must now work for ways of getting the controls more effective.

Conventional weapons are more difficult. Britain already has its own rules, stricter than is often supposed. We need to find ways of distinguishing internationally between peaceful states whose needs are defensive, and others who might use new armaments for aggression. Even where controls are effective, a country which does not like the limits imposed on it may be capable of developing its own manufacturing capability. These difficulties require us to approach the problem with our eyes open. They are not a reason to refuse to approach the problem at all. It cannot be right to allow again a country like Iraq under Saddam Hussein, with his record and policies, to accumulate nearly twice as many tanks as Britain and France combined.

The Arab-Israeli problem is trickiest of all. We can see quite clearly what the end result should be: the state of Israel recognised by all her neighbours and existing behind borders which she feels to be secure; a Palestinian entity on the West Bank, perhaps with a special relationship with Jordan.

fail — will be able to enforce the U.N.'s decisions. Because Iraq's aggression against Kuwait was blatant and indefensible, it was relatively easy to persuade the international community of the need to reverse Iraq's aggression, eventually of the need to take military action. Future disputes are unlikely to be as clear cut.

We live in a world of nation states. The system of order laid down in the U.N. Charter means that security, order and justice are essentially achieved by interaction between states. The differences between systems of government within nation states create argument and strong feelings. Out of this argument can come welcome change. We have just seen in Eastern Europe how bad ideas about government and contempt for human rights can eventually be overturned when exposed to competition with better ideas. But in this system of international order, when one state attacks another, the danger to the international community is greater and more dangerous.

Iraq violated the rights of Kuwait. It was right and responsible of other states to act collectively to restore security and justice. The U.N. acted collectively to protect international order. Resolutions were passed either unanimously or with very substantial majorities. Thirty countries — from every continent —

sent their forces to the Gulf and Arabian desert. Despite his expectations Saddam Hussein failed to rouse Muslim peoples to overthrow their governments on his behalf. The Saudi tank commander and the Kuwaiti pilot showed the world that they were better exponents of Islam than the Iraqi aggressor.

For 40 years after the establishment of the United Nations confrontation between the superpowers prevented the international community from acting collectively without jeopardising all mankind. This is no longer true. The Gulf crisis showed that it is possible for nations acting together to manage responsibly the society of nations.

Now that crisis is over it is our shared responsibility to see that the rules, and the mechanisms for enforcing them — which we have all voluntarily accepted — continue to gain in strength. We live in a rough, disorderly world, and shall never see complete peace and harmony. But the reversal of the aggression in the Gulf should encourage us all to persevere. Britain can no longer impose her own solutions. But because of our long experience, because of our recent effort in the Gulf, because of our partnerships in Europe, with the U.S. in the Security Council and in the Middle East, we have the will and the ability to make a stalwart contribution.

Jordan Times WEEKENDER

Published Every Thursday

Political significance of Japanese throne grows as coronation nears

By Eric Talmadge
The Associated Press

TOKYO — Nearly five decades after allied occupation forces rewrote Japan's constitution to limit the significance of the emperor, fear that politicians are manipulating the throne for their own ends has arisen again.

This time, the warning comes from within Japan's own society as the nation prepares for the coronation on Nov. 12 of Emperor Akihito, the first monarch to be enthroned under the post World War II constitution.

"I am very worried that the palace is being used for political purposes just as the military used the late Emperor Showa (Hirohito) before the war," Minoru Hamao, a former imperial chamberlain, said in an interview.

Hamao, who directed the education of the Akhito and his sons for 20 years, said conservatives who would return to the old imperial system are a minority within the governing Liberal Democratic Party and lack public support.

He added, however, that there was increasing evidence of attempts by politicians "to align themselves with the emperor because they feel that will get them prestige and votes."

But political analyst Asao Yamaguchi said he did not expect a serious effort by Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu to use the throne for political ends.

"Really trying to redefine the role of the monarchy would require a strong political foundation," he said. "Kaifu hasn't got that."

The chrysanthemum throne has been politically important throughout Japanese history, but has had little to do with day-to-day policy.

Feudal Samurai leaders, political reformers at the turn of the century and militarists in the years leading up to World War II each in turn the throne as justification for their own power.

Today, Kaifu's Liberal Democrats, who have governed since their conservative party was formed in 1955, use a logo similar to the imperial chrysanthemum.

According to Hamao, links between the palace and party were relatively weak until Yasuhiro Nakasone, prime minister in the mid-1980s, tried to strengthen his control of the Imperial Household Agency that manages palace affairs.

"The Imperial Household Agency is officially under the supervision of the prime minister's office, and since Nakasone they have used their control over personnel (appointments) to gain power," Hamao said.

He expressed particular concern about politicians being involved in an enthronement rite called the Daijōsai, or Great Food Offering Ritual.

"It is very inappropriate for the prime minister and

other government leaders to attend the Daijōsai because of its religious nature," Hamao said. "Having the politicians there is an imposition, and not in line with the constitution."

Hamao said the palace could not have kept politicians off the guest list, which was strongly influenced by the prime minister's office.

Kaifu's government has acknowledged the religious nature of the Daijōsai, in which a new emperor has his first communion with the gods of Shinto, Japan's state religion until the war ended.

But it has described the rite as an ancient tradition and denied that state funding violates constitutional bans on government support of religious activities.

Hamao believes the decision to follow prewar precedent for Akhito's coronation is an attempt to free the government and Liberal Democrats from constitutional constraints on political manipulation of the throne.

If politicians are allowed to ignore those restraints for the coronation, he said, they may seek to use the emperor in pursuing their goals.

Sadao Yamahana, a legislator and senior member of Japan's largest opposition party, the Socialists, said he believed the banding of the coronation reflected a desire by conservatives to restore some degree of the throne's old status.

Yamahana said members of his party would not take

part in the Daijōsai, "a rite that is intended to make the emperor closer to a god."

The Japan Federation of Bar Associations, several teachers' unions and the National Christian Council of Japan have announced their opposition to state support for the Daijōsai.

In the constitution, written by the U.S.-led occupation authorities who ran Japan's government for seven years after the surrender in 1945, the emperor is defined as the "symbol of the state and the unity of the people."

The sovereign was "sacred and inviolable" in the imperial charter of 1889.

"Most Japanese support the monarchy as it is in the constitution, but because of memories of the war, we also have rather complex feelings towards it," Yamahana said.

About 2,500 dignitaries, including U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle and Prince Charles of Britain are expected to attend the main coronation ceremony.

White Yamahana acknowledged the need to guard against possible attacks by leftist radicals, he also said extreme security could be a means of expanding police powers.

"Police are planning what can only be seen as excessive security, and in this way, too, though subtly, they are saying that the emperor is not a regular person, he is like a god that needs special treatment," he said.

Before the war, Yamahana said the police and government used such thinking to justify silencing dissent. He added that his father, a social activist, was arrested dozens of times "in the emperor's name."

Radicals have declared they will use whatever means available to disrupt the enthronement, including violence. Tokyo police are believed to be planning Japan's

March 21, 1991 A



Emperor Akihito

said, the police and government used such thinking to justify silencing dissent. He added that his father, a social activist, was arrested dozens of times "in the emperor's name."

Two cabinet ministers have suggested invoking a law that would allow the government to force violent, anti-social groups to disband. The law, never used for that purpose, has been criticised as a threat to freedom of speech and association.

largest security operation, possibly involving tens of thousands of officers.

Most these days goes overland through Pakistan's western province of Baluchistan and across Iran. The remainder is sent out through India, by air or sea from Karachi and remote parts of the Arabian Sea coast.

In the Helmand Valley of southwestern Afghanistan, poppy is reportedly growing again after the assassination a year ago of a guerrilla commander who had banned opium cultivation.

Last October the Para-military Frontier Corps stumbled across the world's biggest baul of fine heroin at a trans-shipment centre in few kilometres from the Afghan border in Baluchistan.

Packed in bags originally used to deliver concessionary U.S. wheat were 1.7 tonnes of heroin and seven tonnes of hashish.

That and a series of other

encounters with the Frontier Corps have forced the traffickers to change tactics, sending through small groups of vehicles instead of large caravans armed with anti-aircraft guns and missiles.

In the Helmand Valley of southwestern Afghanistan, poppy is reportedly growing again after the assassination a year ago of a guerrilla commander who had banned opium cultivation.

When Nassem Akhundzada died in a hail of bullets outside Peshawar, his brother Rasool took over and lifted the ban. That is enough, say the experts, to ensure Afghanistan's opium crop increases by up to 30 per cent this year.

On Mother's Day

By Lara Philippi

Slightly rounded, like the party clown, she carried me for nine months, feeling every little motion that I provoked. Then we met. I was brought to her and she held me. I was hers and nothing in the world could change that.

With every day that passed, her love merely augmented. She gave me all that she could and would have given more. My first steps I took with her. They may have been faulty, but to her, they were the best. The word tired ceased to exist, as every one of my needs was met. Day and night, she was on the run, but love was what she gave, not complaints.

As I gradually grew, she planted thoughts in my mind and made me want to seek more. She gently guided me through times of trouble and helped me keep hoping. And she gave me love. The love that I know will always be there because it is unconditional.

When I look in her eyes, I see pride and tender care. No matter what I do she's always there. I know where to turn or where to run, for she freely gives her endless love.

My mother and I are now friends. I only wish that I could return a fraction of what she has always given me. I wish I could repay the nurturing and guidance of many years.

Happy Mother's Day, Mum. I love you and thank you for everything always...

The waif

By E. Yaghi

Northwestern winds whipped through the streets of Amman. The winter air was icy as if it had been ushered in by an Arctic storm. Black clouds hung low over the city smothering out an inattentive sun. In a vacant park near deserted swings and a red and blue slide, stood a lone boy oblivious to the fits of nature. His matted hair stiffly rose to the force of harsh winds. His face flushed at the low temperatures but his fiery eyes glared at the noisy school just across the street from where he stood.

"What fools! Going to school, bah! They're shut inside all day while I am out here free. No one is my master and my best friend is my bottle," he boasted aloud unheard except by the rough winds that pushed his thin body and to his unkempt clothes.

He tottered slightly but firmly clutched a black nylon sack in which was hidden his substance of life. Although the waif Adeeb was only 12 years old, he was an alcoholic. A steady supply of money used as a payoff by his father to pacify the boy was constantly gathered to purchase the forbidden alcohol. The continuous flow of money paid for the boy's perversion and blanketed the hurt of a divorced mother and silenced the reality of an unwanted son to the current second wife, Adeeb's stepmother.

In the early days of his father's second marriage when Adeeb was younger, the boy heard his new worldly mother say to his father with her lips pursed and her voice shrill and cold, "Listen here, I'm not the boy's mother. I'm going to pretend to be. You're much older than I am, but I married you anyway. The servants can care for the boy from now on, don't expect me to. And try to keep him out of my sight as much as possible!"

Adeeb found his father only too willing to comply, perhaps to make up for the fact that he was an older man marrying a young and pretty second wife. But the beauty of Adeeb's stepmother went no further than her cosmetic face and manicured fingernails. Her heart was false and cruel and once when Adeeb crossed her path, her decorated eyes chilled and her voice thinned into a shriek while her face hid the compassion she normally exhibited for her many friends. "What are you doing here, boy? Why aren't you with the servants? Scat before one of my dear friends comes and sees the sight of such a pitiful thing as you!"

Whereas the boy slunk out of the room his stepmother was in and forever learned to avoid her as much as possible. He never ate with his father and stepmother. He was fed in the servants quarters and was at their mercy for any signs of affection he gleaned.

In the beginning, Adeeb's father would stop by the boy's room for short visits. In order to make up for the loss of the boy's mother and the absence of a father, Adeeb was showered with money. Paper bills and coins flooded into his small bank until it almost burst. The streets began to be his new home and rough older boys his guides through life. Seldom anyone asked where he was. No one seemed to care, least of all his artificially adorned stepmother who was never known to wear the same dress twice.

His father's house became the centre of a flurried social life. During the day, there were endless teas for the stepmother's numerous shallow friends that echoed her empty laughter. At night the walls of the fancy house shook with throngs of guests that stayed until the deep of night.

Adeeb grew. His father quit paying attention to him at all. His clothes became shabbier. He seldom bathed. He became the secret son that guests never saw, for the cruel stepmother had two sons of her own to show off and occupy her husband's time. His visits to Adeeb became further and further apart. Only the payoffs kept rolling in.

No one even really knew if the boy attended school or not. No one really cared. And so it was that Adeeb ended up in an empty park that cold winter day with his hands wrapped around a cherished bottle of whiskey, sneering at children his own age who may have been from lower-income families than his, but had the fortune of abundant attention from their parents.

"Hey, Adeeb! Still got some whiskey left?" his older friend shouted from the other side of the park where he too was sneaking stolen drinks from a bottle also nestled in a black nylon sack.

"Yeah." The boy yelled. "Still got some left. I'll need some more later though to take back home. This stuff sure makes a person warm on a day like this!" He raised the bottle to his lips, threw his head back and guzzled the burning liquid. His eyes reddened and he felt warm and happy, a happiness he hadn't known in sober moments for a long time. He drowned out the sorrows of his divorced mother, his uncaring father and his rude cold stepmother.

When he finished his bottle, he threw it on the dry brown ground of the park and it landed with a clink. Some school boys passed him on their way home. Their voices were joyful and their laughter charred his heart. "Oof," one of the boys remarked while passing Adeeb. "This guy reeks of alcohol!"

Not far from where he teetered, the empty bottle lay discarded. Giving off an orange glow. It attracted the boys' attention. At once they understood. From then on, Adeeb and his discarded became a regular sight at the small park. But many boys wondered where Adeeb got his alcohol from and why so young a boy had chosen an apparently wretched life at such an early age.

Perhaps if you pass this certain children's playground you will see young Adeeb. He is a pitiful sight. He braves the streets in all kinds of weather with his bottle tightly clutched to his heart. In this bottle, he seeks the security he never finds at home. His father's only acknowledgement children are the two sons his second wife bore. Adeeb is the shameful tragedy that is overlooked and denied. Better the child were an orphan living in a charity society than a young soul that acquires no warmth, love or care within the circle of his own family.

THOUGHTS FOR THIS WEEK

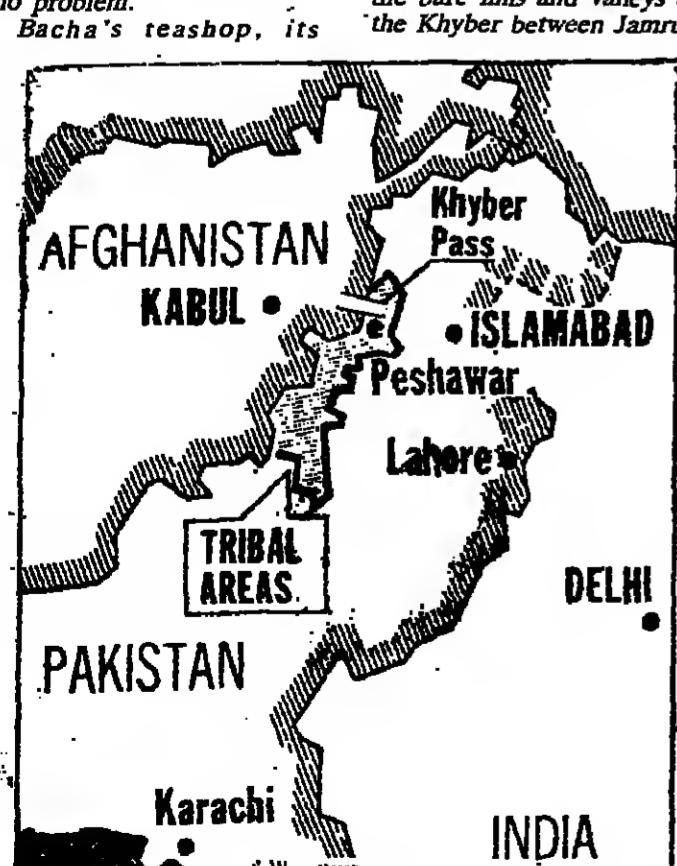
The cruellest lies often are told in silence
— Robert Louis Stevenson, Scottish writer (1850-1891).

Our civilisation is still in a middle stage... no longer wholly guided by instinct, not yet wholly guided by reason
— Theodore Dreiser, U.S. novelist (1871-1945).

Think wrongly, if you please, but in all cases, think for yourself

Gottbold Lessing, German dramatist (1729-1781).

To be conscious that you are ignorant is a great step to knowledge
— Benjamin Disraeli, English statesman (1804-1881).



"All the people I have been talking to are saying they can't wait to get back and plant more poppies. They realise that it is a real money-spinner," said a Western specialist in Peshawar.

Tribal law rules, and in Jamrud, a few kilometres outside the frontier capital Peshawar, just about anything is available at a price. Large quantities of guns, grenades and ammunition are on sale in the bazaar.

Heroin and alcohol salesmen have become more discreet since a tribal council started a crackdown.

But that has done nothing to stop the highly profitable heroin trade that is centred in the bare hills and valleys of the Khyber between Jamrud and

the United States this month certified that Pakistan was doing enough to tackle drug trafficking to continue getting drugs-related aid despite strong misgivings elsewhere.

In private, diplomats in Islamabad say Pakistan could become another Colombia, where a cocaine cartel is openly at war with a government weakened by the corrupting power of narcotics.

"We have been telling them for years, look at Colombia. If this continues you are going to look at a Colombia-like situation," said an Islamabad-based envoy.

Drug specialists point to perhaps 20 people controlling the bulk of heroin trafficking. Few have ever been touched by the authorities and eight or nine are members of parliament.

Despite Pakistan's efforts to persuade poor farmers to stop growing opium poppy, more opium was produced last year than the year before and all the signs point to a bumper crop on both sides of the border this year.

Cleaning the desk

By Maha Addasi

You've just "tidied" up someone's desk and he came back to find what you've done and instead of a "thank you" you got yelled at. Congratulations! You have now entered the real world, where people never ever thank you for cleaning their desks. You know why? Because if you had taken this person's thoughts and placed them in a blender you would not have mangled this person's life better than you have done by cleaning his or her desk. This is because people have their own methods of organising their thoughts and they often arrange the papers on their desks to complement their lines of thinking.

So if the "victim" is patient, the reaction would be somewhere along these lines:

"Oh my God!" her or she yells at the top of their lungs. "You arranged the papers in order of increasing size. If you had set a fan at the edge of the desk and blown away the papers there would have been a better chance for me to find what I'm looking for, but this is outrageous!"

"Why? Why?" the victim groans. "Why me?"

"The room was so messy I could barely see the desk so I thought I should clean up the mess," comes the culprit's answer.

"It's my mess!" the victim yells, almost near tears. "Now I can't find anything I'm looking for, not one thing!"

And it is the truth. Many people arrange their desks in such a way that it appears messy to an onlooker but it is the most appropriate filing system for the person who uses the desk. So items that are top priority are in one area of the desk whereas items that can wait are on a different corner. In fact, rumour has it that people who work at neat desks are not really doing much.

The problem is that many mothers fall into the pattern of the culprit. This does not happen overnight though. There are steps for it.

As children grow up the mother keeps telling them to clean their rooms "or else," to tidy their beds, "or else." Or, she tells them that they are grounded and must tidy up their rooms as punishment. So the natural response is that the kids grow up despising tidiness. By the time they are in



college on their own they go wild. One mother cited the following example about her child:

"I visited my son in college once and was stunned at the sight of the room," she said. "I pitied myself for the time I spent stressing the importance of neatness."

"Can you believe it?" she said. "If the phone rings in his room he has to search for a while to find the phone." "At least he eventually finds the phone," said the other mother. "With my son if the phone rings, it's too bad for the caller because the phone can't be located."

Both these mothers agree, though, that the phone is the only thing their sons cannot find. If you ask them for anything else they can tell you where it is with excruciating accuracy. "It's under the blue shirt that's under the grey trousers that are under the bed on the side closest next to the side table that has the pile of laundry on it," they say when you ask for a safety pin.

So when these children graduate and work at desks they use the same methods of "organisation" they taught in college.

Trying to redisipline these children is a surefire way that they would start to redisipline you.

"If you think the desk is very messy, just close the door," the kids suggest.

Unfortunately, until the most recent survey, painfully few mothers have acted upon this suggestion.

B.C.



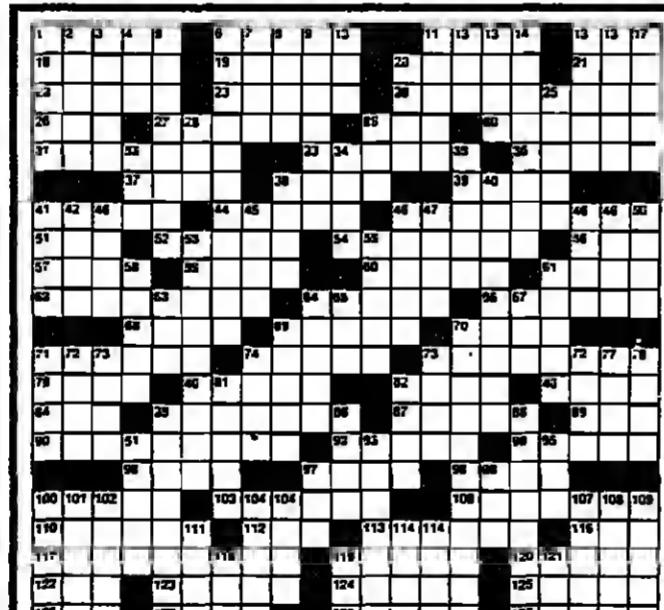
Weekend Crossword

BORN!
By Craig Schulz

ACROSS
1 Ventilated
2 Par
3 Metric measure
4 Entry
5 Moon valley
6 Library or cell
7 Poop
8 Egypt statesman
9 Singer John
10 Land
11 Literary collection
12 Kind of computer
13 Moon's summer
14 Kind of perception
15 Old field texture
16 Old person's persons
17 Adverbs
18 Thanks --
19 Rhyme --
20 S.O.T.
21 Set -- for (try to share)
22 Went to places
23 Set
24 Sailor's time off
25 Shows pluck
26 Tell secrets
27 Looking stlye
28 Distracting
29 Making public
30 Begans
31 Soviet
32 Fencing sword
33 Bankers
34 Sharp flavor
35 Take a -- (try)
36 Cut
37 Traveler

DOWN
1 Eye leader
2 Empty
3 Detection device
4 Period of time
5 Pardon
6 Overcome
7 Reserve
8 Rhubarb
9 Singing voice
10 Blocked up
11 Poetic word
12 Poem
13 Pipe joint
14 Nothing in Madrid
15 Make money
16 Step on --
17 Track entrant
18 Blest abodes
19 Blasted abodes
20 Lazy --
21 Spt.

Diagramless
19 X 19, By Harold B. Coates



Last Week's Cryptograms

1. Aged fighter fought and lost feature bout by a mile to promising young pugilist.
2. The true artist need not fear dramatic criticism as much as some fearsome critics do.
3. It seems we need many excuses if we would lead a life full of zest.
4. Against rural renewal, the pig says, "Why my sty? Humph!"

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. CROO JBSPY CDDW ESLXOM JTYKC
COBTSEC JTDBX OH JTKHP CDBT DA
CBTWYM AKTL. —By Gordon Miller
2. NIVINII SLG KYLHRI ET WTYENTR
EZI L'WEATY TV HAM SNIGERING AY
VTEN-PLY ELM-EILP PLEWZ. —By Ed Huddleston
3. WRONTEL OPIOY OITNEX MOX TIQIP AIIT
HEGM HCETJ YC AI O PIXWIGYOARI
GCKEKCJNYL YC MOQI NT OTL CH CEP
XCGNIXX. —By Gordon Miller
4. BELTS WELTS DOBS WYCWA OA XPELTS
BE MYLAX MSYOPAYD'A CELTS MELTS.
—By Norton Rhoade

SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE



JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Saturday, March 23

9:10 Documentary

All Our Children

Orphaned children, all around the world, want to be useful if only a caring hand helps them find their place in the world.

10:00 New in English

10:20 Paradise

Little Joseph is in jail for something he did not do. Inside he gets involved with a gang... it takes Uncle Ethan's help to get him out of this mess.

Monday, March 25

8:30 Golden Girls

Blanche is concluding a business transaction but a session of reminiscence foils her plan with a happy ending.

9:10 The Keepers

Taking The Bait

Following a tip-off that bad fish is being brought into the

10:00 News in English

10:20 Love And Hate

Joan, the good housewife, manages to free herself from her alcoholic but influential husband, but later on she finds that is not the end of him in her life.

10:20 French Feature Film

Notre Juliette

Juliette, at the age of 10, is having to go through life normally despite the fact that her parents are divorced with no one else close enough to help her.

Wednesday, March 27

8:30 After Henry

Memory Games

9:10 Our House

See You In Court

Guss finds out, the hard way, that action stemming from moral grounds does not necessarily make it legal.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Thursday, March 21

independence of United States.

1848 — Sardinia declares war on Austria.

1882 — Robert Koch, German bacteriologist, announces isolation of tuberculous germs.

1919 — Soviet republic is proclaimed.

1939 — Germany annexes Memel from Lithuania.

1953 — The Sudan achieves self-government.

1988 — Jordan calls on Muslim World to support Palestinian unrest in Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

1991 — Britain and Italy reach agreement in Ethiopia, defining frontiers of their Red Sea colonies.

1924 — Greece is proclaimed a republic.

1927 — Chinese Communists seize Nanking in China.

1929 — Fascists "win" single-party elections in Italy.

1955 — New constitution goes into effect in Tanganyika.

1972 — Britain takes over direct control of Northern Ireland in effort to restore peace.

1974 — Uganda crushes coup attempt against President Idi Amin following machine gun and mortar battle.

1988 — Chadian soldiers seize major Libyan ground and air base at Ouedi Doum in northern Chad after heavy fighting.

1989 — In Lebanon, Christian army commander refuses to accept ceasefire in 17-day conflict with Syrian troops and Druze militiamen.

1990 — Last Indian soldiers withdraw from Trincomalee, Sri Lanka, after a deadlocked 2 1/2-year-old jungle war against Tamil guerrillas.

1942 — Programme of moving Japanese-Americans from their homes on U.S. west coast to inland camps during World War II is begun.

1945 — U.S. and British forces cross Rhine River in Germany during World War II.

1918 — Lithuania proclaims its independence.

1919 — Benito Mussolini founds new political movement in Italy.

1933 — German Reichstag grants Adolf Hitler dictatorial powers until April 1937.

1942 — Programme of moving Japanese-Americans from their homes on U.S. west coast to inland camps during World War II is begun.

1945 — U.S. and British forces cross Rhine River in Germany during World War II.

1936 — United States, Britain and France sign London Naval Convention.

1941 — Yugoslavia joins Rome-Berlin-Tokyo alliance in World War II.

1957 — Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands sign treaties for common market and Euratom.

1969 — Pakistan's President Ayub Khan turns power over to military after 11 years of leadership.

1975 — Saudi Arabia's King Faisal is assassinated in Riyadh by his nephew, Faisal's brother, Crown Prince Khalid, succeeds to throne.

1988 — Israel troops open fire on Palestinians who attacked Arab school converted to makeshift army headquarters in occupied West Bank.

1989 — Heads of Egypt, Jordan and Palestine Liberation Organisation meet to coordinate Middle East peace strategy.

1995 — Peace of Boulogne ends England's war with France and Scotland.

Dangerous rumours

By E. Yaghi

Just before the beginning of the Gulf war, the citizens of Jordan were warned by various officials not to listen to any rumours that might be circulating. The requests of these officials were largely ignored and a majority of Jordanians regardless of education or social status became obsessed by an assortment of ludicrous reports.

Unfortunately, these false reports hurt not only those persons of whom they were whispered, but also friends, families and personal contacts of those persons rumoured about. A rumour is like a stone cast into still waters — its ripples are far reaching.

For some strange reason, bad news is more interesting and tastier to convey than good, thus further fanning the fires of untruths. Some of the people responsible for spreading strange stories swoon at their authenticity and either knew a neighbour, friend and so forth who could verify their tales. Some incorrect stories were even published in the local newspapers by careless journalists who were either too lazy or uncaring to back up their stories with facts.

One particular and interesting rumour was spread about one of the peace activists who came to Jordan and in protest of the Gulf war, went on a hunger strike. It was repeated by many that this woman was a spy and out to harm President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. This peace activist had been a guest in one of the hospitals here in Amman at the invitation of a renowned doctor who was also the director of said hospital. The woman was encouraged by many concerned persons to return to America and continue her hunger strike there in the hope that she would gain the attention of President Bush and thus prove to be more effective. She completed around 30 days of her hunger strike here in Amman and on many occasions commented on the gracious hospitality of the Jordanian people. But, rumour had it that instead of going to America, she made her way to Baghdad with explosives surgically implanted in her body. No one questioned just how such afeat could be physically possible. Another rumour that was circulating about the same woman at the time was that she carried a secret transmitting device, also surgically concealed, that would give off signals when she discovered the Iraqi president's whereabouts. Few thought to reason that at the time of war, the Iraqi president wasn't available for curious visitors or even dreaded spies to be found in the form of one elderly starving woman who had already completed three weeks of a hunger strike.

There is documented proof that this particular peace activist was taken from her hospital in Amman by private car to Queen Alia International Airport and placed on a plane to her country, the United States. While in America, she continued her fast in front of the White House. After about 33 days of her hunger strike, she finally broke her fast upon bearing the news of the Soviet peace proposals approximately 7 days before the ceasefire. Witnesses can confirm having telephone conversations with the peace activist's son and then later with the woman herself as she spoke in a weakened condition from her mother's house.

Although these rumours do not hurt the peace activist, for she has since gone, it has definitely harmed those persons who were kind enough to share with her their warm Jordanian hospitality as well as those who believed and repeated false rumours concerning her.

But what about those people who live here in Jordan and are forced to live with the cruel rumours that were issued about them? The lies that were spread have surely unjustly hurt them very much.

War is a critical time. It is especially during this time that more confidence should be placed in the Jordanian army and Jordanian police. They are quite capable, as often proved, of locating and apprehending felons or those who threaten the security of the country. Believing rumours can be very dangerous. Before any story is believed, there should be ample proof, not heresy to document accusations. The welfare and stability of the country might be at stake. At times, the importance of the media has been underestimated while sometimes itself has become a tool of false rumours. To those persons living in the Middle East, it has been seen how the international media was manipulated and the Gulf war was thus waged because people in the coalition countries were duped into believing that this war was just, noble and to liberate Kuwait. I hereby rest my case.

Sunday, March 24

1267 — St. Louis of France calls his knights to Paris to prepare for his second crusade to Holy Land.

1595 — Peace of Boulogne ends England's war with France and Scotland.

By The Associated Press

Big stars and big budgets mark 5 Best

Picture nominees for Academy Awards

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The five big-budget, big-star movies contending for the Academy Award prize of best picture of 1990 offer a wide range of entertainment. They are two gangster epics, a romantic comedy-fantasy, a medical drama and a Western.

The gangster movies are *The Godfather, Part III*, one of the most expensive films ever made, and *Goodfellas*, one of the most violent.

Frances Ford Coppola's travails with the final chapter of his *Godfather* saga packed almost as much drama as the movie itself. The director's battles with officials at Paramount Pictures mounted as filming lurched over budget and schedule.

There was friction over Coppola's insistence on casting his daughter, Sofia, in place of the ailing Winona Ryder in the vital role as Michael Corleone's daughter.

Mary. Some of those connected with the film feared Sofia was not experienced enough to play the demanding role. Critics of the completed film seemed to agree.

Reviews of *Godfather III* dwelled on the reported \$50 million to \$60 million cost, and most termed it inferior to the first two in the trilogy, both winners as best picture. Considering the film's cost, the domestic box office was disappointing: \$64 million in 62 days.

In making *Goodfellas*, Martin Scorsese drew from his own memories of growing up in New York City's little Italy. He saw the mobsters — also called "good fellas" — ruling the neighbourhood like privileged citizens, bestowing their largesse on the respectful residents. They were the objects of envy with their fancy cars and flashy women.

The screenplay, by Scorsese and Nicholas Pileggi based on Pileggi's biography *Wise Guy*, traces the rise and fall of a mobster (Ray Liotta) who turns informant.

Although the movie shows many graphic killings as well as the high life of the mob, Scorsese says he intended no glamorisation of the mafia: "Ultimately the lifestyle leads to disintegration and death."

Goodfellas was embraced by the critics, winning the New York and Los Angeles Film Critics Societies' prizes as best picture. Ticket sales were only fair: \$42 million in 159 days.

On the other hand, *Ghost* drew faint critical praise but proved the top moneymaker in 1990 — \$227 million. Such movies rarely get a nod from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Amid the high-teeth action films of the summer, this film about

romance that continued after death carried great appeal for American audiences.

Jerry Zucker (*Airplane!*) replaced Frank Oz as director of *Ghost*. Zucker comments on the film's huge success: "I enjoy making movies. I also like to watch the audience's reaction from the back of the theatre. The biggest thrill is to be able to transport the audience, to make them laugh, cry and be scared."

"That's the joy of film-making: to give the people an emotional experience in the theatre and have them go out happy. That's what *Ghost* was able to do."

The high-powered casting of Robin Williams and Robert De Niro and Penny Marshall's direction contributed to the success of *Awakenings*, a difficult subject to dramatise. The screenplay by Steve Zaillian was based on the book by Dr. Oliver Sacks, who wrote of the summer, this film about

his experience of restoring a group of vegetative patients to total consciousness, only to have them regress when the medication failed.

Ms. Marshall, one-time star of TV's *Laverne And Shirley*, recalled in a newspaper interview that she cried when she read the script that had been presented by her agent. She took the project to Dawn Steel, head of Columbia Pictures production until Sony bought the company.

"*Dawn* green-lighted it,

and then *Dawn* wasn't there anymore. I don't know who was there. And we were going a little bit over (budget). But they weren't yelling. So we figured maybe *Sooy* liked it," said Ms. Marshall. The film received mixed reviews and performed moderately well in theatres: \$42 million in 10 weeks.

Dances With Wolves was the only film among the five nominees to win equally good



A scene from Martin Scorsese's *Goodfellas*, one of the most violent films ever made.

reviews and business. After 12 weeks in release, Kevin Costner's panoramic Western had sold \$117 million worth of tickets.

Dances With Wolves was the only film despite the general belief that Westerns were poison at the box office.

Costner admitted his foolhardiness in a magazine interview: "It's a dumb first movie. Full of kids, animals, first-time actors speaking in a foreign language. A period piece on top of that. But I'm just offering up the film, letting the people decide."

The verdict was resounding approval, and academy voters may well add their endorsement on March 25.

Talent wins Oscars — along with studio millions

By Ronald Clarke

Reuter

LOS ANGELES — Film studios are spending millions of dollars promoting Oscar nominees on billboards and in hundreds of newspaper advertisements and are sending out streams of free videocassettes of their creations.

Hollywood is caught up in its annual bout of Oscar fever — and talent or quality are not the only things that make a winner.

Film analysts said each studio is spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on promotion and they put the total figure at between \$5 million and \$10 million.

Videocassettes are the studios' latest tool. Knowing that many of the over 4,700 actors, directors and technicians grouped in the voting body of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences are not regular cinema-goers, the studios are taking the films to them



Gerard Depardieu and Anne Brochet in *Cyrano de Bergerac*

via videocassette.

When Irish actor Richard Harris was nominated for best actor for his role in *The Field*, the film was showing in only 30 U.S. cinemas.

The studio, Avenue Films, sent 1,300 cassettes of the film to the members of

the academy's actors branch which votes for best actor.

Harris could still suffer. British actor Daniel Day-Lewis won the Oscar for best actor last year for *My Left Foot* and academy members may not want the award to go to the other side

of the Atlantic two years in succession.

In competition with Harris is Kevin Costner for *Dances With Wolves*. Robert De Niro for *Awakenings*. Frenchman Gerard Depardieu for *Cyrano De Bergerac* and British Jeremy

Irons for *Reversal Of Fortune*.

A general feeling among the studios is that Costner's *Dances With Wolves*, a sweeping tale of the American frontier that had been dismissed in its early stages as too difficult to make and sell, has the stamp of an Oscar winner.

During its four months of release, the film, which received 12 nominations, has earned \$127 million and could wipe out the old Oscar saying that an award for best picture is worth at least \$20 million at the U.S. box office.

By the time the Oscars are handed out on March 25, *Dances With Wolves* may have all but fulfilled its U.S. box office potential.

A best-picture award, however, can still bring in millions overseas.

Also in the best-film category are *Awakenings*, *Ghost* — a film known more

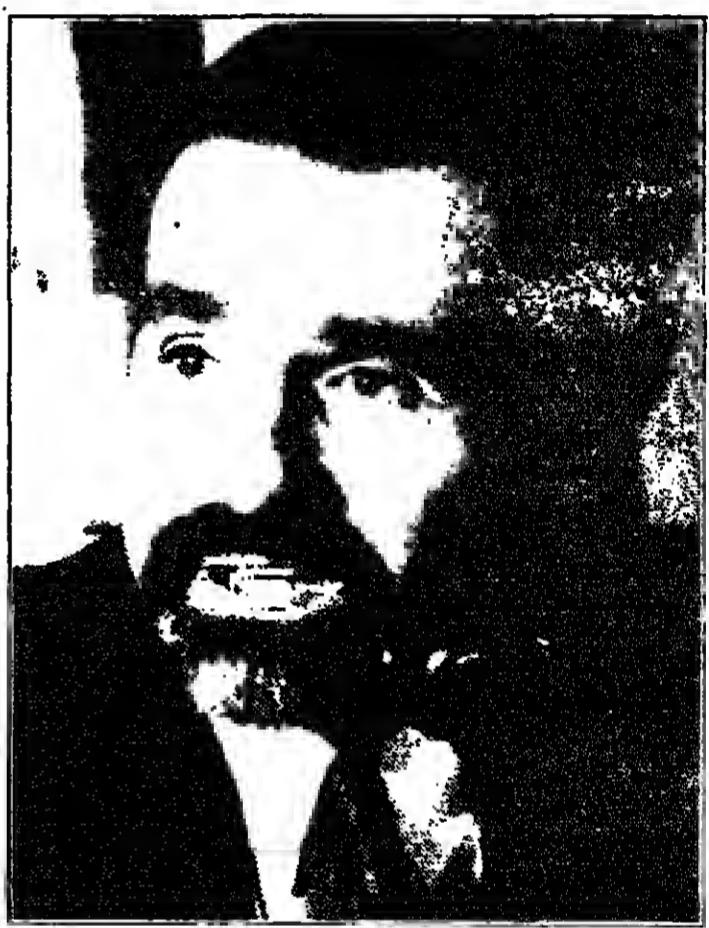
for its box-office success than its artistic achievements. *The Godfather Part III*, and *Goodfellas*, described by one foreign expert as too good a film to win an Oscar.

During the past two days, studios have bought advertisements on 30 pages of the entertainment industry newspaper *Variety* to show off their Oscar nominees. They include a full page for a relatively little-known Chinese film, *Ju Dou*, nominated for Best Foreign Language Film.

The advertisements will continue until the ballots are in.

Film stars nominated for Oscars look down from billboards on Sunset Boulevard, a Hollywood tradition. But lavish dinners once given by studios to academy members are out of style.

Studio officials said they were over very good wine.



Martin Scorsese

Chinese market. Some nude scenes," he said.

Actually, there is no nudity, only glimpses of the woman's back and shoulders as she bathes. But it is loaded with scenes of fully-clothed young lovers smouldering with passion.

The film bureaus submitted it as China's Academy Awards entry before it realised the problem, Liu said.

Zhang was in Tokyo editing a new Chinese-Taiwanese movie, and his Taiwanese partners refused to let reporters talk to him. It was not known if he planned to attend the award ceremony March 25.

Film industry sources said the Chinese government already has told the U.S. embassy it won't send any representatives.

Oscar nominee barred from theatres but an underground hit

By Kathy Wilhelm
The Associated Press

PEKING — China's first movie ever nominated for an Academy Award is an underground hit at home.

Banned from theatres until the director cuts some of its scenes of illicit passion, *Ju Dou* is being circulated among intellectuals on poor-quality videotapes copied from other copies.

"I could only get it for half a day," apologised one woman whose friends heard she had a copy and wanted to see it.

Although the film was submitted by China's Film Bureau for the award, the government now wants the movie withdrawn from competition for the United States' Top Foreign Film

honour. It cites the award competition's rule that entries must be shown commercially in their own country.

The U.S. motion picture academy has refused, in what it sees as a stand against government interference.

Only one Chinese newspaper reported the nomination, which normally would be considered a national honour. As a result, few Chinese outside intellectual circles have heard of it.

The government ban has made *Ju Dou* more successful underground than it probably would be in the theatres, Chinese say.

The story is not told well," said an assistant film

director not connected with *Ju Dou*. "The writing, the directing are lacking."

Others complained that most of the movie seemed to be shot in the dark.

But it has become a symbol abroad of artistic repression in China, particularly in the conservative Communist backlash that followed the June 1989 army attack on pro-democracy protesters. Movie studios have been encouraged to produce revolutionary epics and uplifting stories of daily life.

The director of *Ju Dou*, Zhang Yimou, is one of a

small group of young filmmakers who moved Chinese cinema out of the realm of propaganda in the 1980s with honest, earthy depictions of villages and the lives of alienated urban youth.

Several of these movies won foreign awards, including Zhang's 1988 *Red Sorghum*. But they often were criticised at home as too pretentious and pessimistic.

Liu Cheng, in charge of censorship at the state film bureau, said in an interview that foreign awards are not China's main concern.

"What China puts most emphasis on is the impact a

movie has inside the country," he said.

By that standard, China's movie of the year is *Jiao Yulu*, the true story of a low-level Communist Party official who worked tirelessly to help the peasants in his poor county.

Party members have been told to see the movie and model themselves on Jiao, who died in 1966. Work units and schools bought the tickets to all the showings in Beijing a week in advance and are sending employees in

to see it. If *Ju Dou* represents the

new school of Chinese film-making, *Jiao Yulu* epitomises the old. It ends with a tableau of Jiao and peasants marching forward carrying huge red flags.

However, its unabashed sentimentality makes it more likely to appeal to ordinary audiences than the gloomy *Ju Dou*. Jiao's death brought tearful sniffs from viewers at one theatre.

Liu said *Ju Dou* has artistic and technical merit and could be released if cut in "six or seven places."

"A certain number of scenes are not suitable for the

Kadokawa wants to produce a Japanese Ben Hur

By Daniel Cox
Reuter

NEW YORK — Film-maker Haruki Kadokawa cannot decide whether his latest project is a Japanese Ben Hur or a *Samurai Spartacus*.

The Japanese director and producer of more than 60 films says those two American movies, famed for their epic battle scenes, were his childhood favourites.

With *Heaven And Earth*, a two-hour drama of 16th century warfare between Shogun warriors, Kadokawa has

drawn from Japanese history to replicate the grand cinematic battles he saw as a youngster.

"I wondered for a long time if there was anything in Japanese history as spectacular as those films," he said through an interpreter during an interview in New York.

"The only way was a battle between two Shoguns, two big Shoguns clashing with each other, just like the medieval days in Europe with knights clashing," he said.

For the story Kadokawa borrowed liberally from a

famous battle between two 16th century Japanese warlords, Kaga and Takeda, on the plains of Kawanakajima.

To give *Heaven And Earth* an epic quality Kadokawa took a free-spending Hollywood approach — hiring 3,000 extras as foot soldiers and using more than 1,000 horses.

He was meticulous about costume authenticity, spending \$2 million to manufacture more than 4,900 costumes, 4,400 spears and 5,800 swords.

The film's final cost — after a three-month shooting delay when the leading star fell ill and had to be replaced — was \$42 million, making it the most expensive Japanese movie.

It has already been compared with Akira Kurosawa's *Ran*, Japanese version of King Lear that used more than 1,000 extras, and to *Lawrence Of Arabia* which used 4,000 bedouins and hundreds of camels.

Kadokawa's extravagance seems to have paid off. *Heaven And Earth* has become the third highest-grossing film in Japanese history and is slowly creeping up the ratings to challenge top-placed *E.T.*

Heaven And Earth has become the third highest-grossing film in Japanese history and is slowly creeping up the ratings to challenge top-placed *E.T.*

The film took a year to shoot, largely because of the lavish war scenes that make up nearly three-quarters of its length. Kadokawa said battle scenes with thousands of extras had to be shot several times — until they were right.

Kadokawa came under some fire in the Japanese press when the film was released last June because he used a grassy plain in Alberta, Canada, to re-create the Kawanakajima plains. He also hired Canadian extras rather than Japanese.

"I would have used the Kawanakajima, but that site is covered with buildings and telephone wires now," Kadokawa said. "And I used Canadian extras because the energy level of Canadians is different from Japanese. They participated in full, giving all they could give."

Although his films rank high on Japanese box-office lists, the director has never had an American hit. His *Virus*, released in the mid-1970s, starred American actors George Kennedy, Chuck Connors, Bo Svenson and Robert Vaughn. But the movie was panned by the critics.

Kadokawa is an avid adventurer. In 1980 he sailed a catamaran from Japan to Chile.

Next year he plans to command a replica of Christopher Columbus' ship, the *Santa Maria*, on an eight-month, 17,000-mile (27,000-kilometres) voyage from Barceloneta to Tokyo, commemorating the 500th anniversary of the discovery of the new world.

Has has also dabbled in theatre, producing versions of *Three Penny Opera* and *Shogun*. Both Broadway musicals had been expected to do well in Japan, but closed within a few months. His training as a high Shinto priest — has chants every morning before work — has made him somewhat philosophical about financial losses on his ventures.

Widely used gold salts 'ineffective' for arthritis relief

By A. J. Hostetler
The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Gold salts, a widely accepted treatment for arthritis, fail to provide long-term relief from the joint disease, a study suggests.

Patients with rheumatoid arthritis who were injected weekly with gold salts suffered disabilities and pain similar to what was felt by people who weren't injected, according to a study published in the latest edition of the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

The researchers at the University of California, San Francisco, and Kaiser-Permanente Medical Centre in Oakland, California, studied the course of arthritis in 574 patients for five years.

Other arthritis researchers said the study overstated the case against gold salts. They said other studies have shown the treatment effective in short-term use of under a year.

Of the 574 patients, the analysis compared 142 who were treated with gold salts for at least two years to 284 patients who received other treatment, according to the study's lead author, Dr. Wallace Epstein. The results were then statistically adjusted and showed that patients given gold salts received no benefit compared to those who did not receive that drug.

"The results of this study show that we must re-examine our standard treatment of this chronic disease," Epstein said.

The use of gold salts began

about 50 years ago, when researchers discovered its ability to fight tuberculosis. Scientists thought it could be used similarly to fight the infection thought to cause rheumatoid arthritis. The cause of the chronic disease is unknown.

Since then, the drug has had a "rollercoaster ride" in its level of acceptance, according to the president of the American College of Rheumatology, Dr. Robert Meenan of Boston University.

The drug is now generally thought beneficial for about 60 per cent of arthritis patients for treatment lasting less than a year, he said.

Epstein said his study was the first to look at the long-term effects of gold salts, a drug so toxic that about one-fourth of patients have to stop using it because of side effects.

Dr. John Abruzzo, a rheumatologist familiar with the study, said it was "a decent attempt, but not the final word" on the treatment.

Abruzzo, director of Thomas Jefferson University's arthritis centre, said the study adds to the controversy over gold salts.

He said the data lacked enough detail about changes patients experienced during treatment, a problem he said was inherent in studies of chronic illnesses.

Meenan agreed that the study was "a good shot" at examining the benefits of gold salts.

But he said the researchers were "a little too dismissive of gold salts' short-term benefits."

Cuba lures 'medical tourists' with cheap care, new treatments

By Candice Hughes
The Associated Press

HAVANA — Jimmy Engineer mortgaged his future to come here from India and waits behind thick bandages for his drumming sight to return.

Engineer is one of thousands of "health tourists" expected to visit Cuba this year, lured by low-cost care or treatments not available elsewhere.

Cuba sees health tourism as a source of international prestige and hard currency. It promotes the concept in brochures, at trade fairs, through travel agents and magazines, and plans a health tourism convention in October 1992.

About 2,000 foreigners came for medical treatment last year, said Dr. Ricardo Martinez Rojas. He is head of Servimed, the government agency that handles health tourism, a five-year-old programme in Cuba.

Engineer was attracted by the treatment most in demand, a combination of microsurgery, Vitamin Therapy, electrical stimulation and blood oxygenation for retinitis pigmentosa, which is considered incurable elsewhere.

Although Cuba has yet to publish scientific studies or its treatment for the degenerative eye disease, word has spread.

Engineer read about it in a magazine published in his home state of Gujarat in western India. The article described dramatic results experienced by three other Indians.

"One of them now plays tennis at night," Engineer said. "I made up my mind to come to Cuba."

He borrowed all the money he could, flew from Bombay to Havana and checked into the Cira Garcia Clinic.

Indian doctors were dis-

couraging. Engineer said, telling him "that if retinitis pigmentosa couldn't be treated in the United States, which has a different hospital for every limb of your body, how could a small country like Cuba do it?"

Also recuperating from the same treatment at the clinic were another Indian, eight Norwegians and several Latin Americans.

After returning to India, Engineer said in a telephone interview: "The results are definitely positive. ... I can see better and the images appear to me better and clearer than before."

Cuban medicine is one of the great prides of the Communist revolution and is generally well-regarded. The life expectancy of 70 years and infant death rate of fewer than 11 in 1,000 live births are among Latin America's best.

Packages provided by servimed include everything from treatment to translators. Payment can be made in any freely convertible currency. Credit cards are accepted.

In addition to rare or unique treatments, Cuban doctors perform heart transplants and most standard procedures.

Prices are low by U.S. standards: \$10,000 for a coronary bypass, \$2,500 for a face lift, \$3,500 for a cornea transplant, \$3,300 for the retinitis pigmentosa treatment, \$400 for an abortion.

Martinez Rojas said two "anti-stress" clinic-resorts had opened and Cuba hopes to build more to accommodate tired businessmen and other visitors.

Thermal spas, drug and alcohol treatment centres and "executive" packages that include rest and recreation with a checkup are also in the works.

Indian doctors were dis-

Researchers identify key gene in development of colon cancer

By Paul Recer
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Researchers have said they have identified a gene that is a "smoking gun" link to an early stage of colon cancer. Scientists thought it could be used similarly to fight the infection thought to cause rheumatoid arthritis. The cause of the chronic disease is unknown.

Since then, the drug has had a "rollercoaster ride" in its level of acceptance, according to the president of the American College of Rheumatology, Dr. Robert Meenan of Boston University.

The drug is now generally thought beneficial for about 60 per cent of arthritis patients for treatment lasting less than a year, he said.

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Meenan agreed that the study was "a good shot" at examining the benefits of gold salts.

But he said the researchers were "a little too dismissive of gold salts' short-term benefits."

of the earliest changes that occurs during the progression from a normal cell to a colon cancer cell," Kinzler said.

A report on the study is to be published Friday in the journal *Science*.

Earlier studies have shown that many cancers arise from a series of genetic mutations in cells. Some mutated genes, called oncogenes, cause abnormal cell growth. Other genes, called tumor suppressors, normally prevent the abnormal growth. When mutation causes the tumor suppressors to not work normally, then a natural control on cell growth is removed.

Evidence suggests that it may take one or more oncogenes plus the mutation of one or more suppressor genes for a tumor to develop.

"We have several lines of evidence to suggest that (the mutation of the gene) is one

Kinzler said that *MCC*

appears to be a suppressor gene. In addition to its mutation, he said, "we think there are four to six changes that have to occur before it can become a cancer cell."

The Hopkins researchers in earlier studies identified two other suppressor genes, called *P53* and *DCC*, and one oncogene, called *RAS*. Other genes, called tumor suppressors, normally prevent the abnormal growth. When mutation causes the tumor suppressors to not work normally, then a natural control on cell growth is removed.

Colon and rectum cancer is diagnosed annually in about 140,000 Americans and is responsible for about 60,000 deaths a year, about 12 per cent of all cancer deaths, according to the National Cancer Institute.

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John Minna of the National Cancer Institute — navy medical oncology branch said in a related report in *Science*

tated in the cancerous cells of a patient, but not in the normal cells.

"That is sort of a smoking gun," said Kinzler. "It is a very strong piece of evidence that this gene is important in the development of cancer."

Though the research points strongly at *MCC*, the scientist said that it should be considered only as a "candidate gene" until other studies confirm its role in colon cancer.

One proof, he said, will come when scientists put a normal *MCC* gene into a cancerous cell and show that the suppressor gene prevents the growth of the cancer.

Kinzler said the Hopkins group found the *MCC* gene by searching through hundreds of colon tumor specimens. Finally, he said, they found a gene that was mu-

tated in the cancerous cells of a patient, but not in the normal cells.

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People with *FAP* develop thousands of polyps and colon cancer is known to occur at an early age in families with this condition.

Kinzler said that if *MCC* is proven to be involved in inherited colon cancer, "then it would be possible to screen patients and determine those at risk and then follow them more closely as they get older."

Such tests are far in the future, however, he said.

An even more important result of the gene studies, he said, could be the eventual development of drugs that attack colon cancer by restoring the tumor suppression function of the mutated gene.

"If we do eventually understand the biochemistry of this gene, then it might be possible to supply what is missing (due to the mutation). It would become a good target for future anti-cancer drugs," said Kinzler.

In addition to the Johns Hopkins researchers, scientists at the University of Utah, the cancer Institute in Tokyo, Japan, and at ICI Pharmaceuticals in England, contributed to the discovery.

Science, which published the study, is the journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

New technique for diagnosing hemophilia

By Randi Hutter Epstein
The Associated Press

LONDON — A rapid new method for examining the gene linked to the most common form of hemophilia will identify the disease in people more accurately than ever before, British researchers reported.

The new technique will detect "virtually 100 per cent of carriers" of hemophilia A, said Dr. Francesco Giannelli of London's Guy's Hospital, who developed the process.

The medical director of the National Hemophilia Foundation in the United States

called the report in the *Lancet* medical journal "exciting," though he said it was based on work with only two patients.

About 20,000 American men have hemophilia, a deficiency or absence of one of the proteins needed to clot blood, according to the National Hemophilia Foundation.

Hemophilia A, caused by a defect in the protein factor VIII, is the most common form, affecting 85 per cent of the cases.

Women carry the defective gene but don't suffer any symptoms. Men can inherit

any one of a number of potential defects on this huge gene.

Dr. Jean Lusher, the director of the National Hemophilia Foundation, said the British technique is a "new version of examining genes that's easier and quicker to do, and will help many families."

She said it will be particularly important for hemophiliacs' female relatives who might want children. There is a 50 per cent chance the child of a carrier will inherit the defective gene.

Women carry the defective gene but don't suffer any symptoms. Men can inherit

any one of a number of potential defects on this huge gene.

Known to be important, said Giannelli, but, "only a very small proportion of mutations could be identified," and only half of the carriers were detected, he added. The new test takes a more thorough look at the gene.

Though he reported on two patients only, Giannelli said it is the technique that is significant, not the number of patients.

Lusher was not put off by a report on only two patients. She says the technique described is "superior to anything I've seen," and suspects it would work on all people.

"I thought the beauty of

this advance is substantial for at least three reasons," Giannelli wrote in the *Lancet*. Direct diagnosis is more precise and potentially cheaper than gene tracking based on fragments—nearly all families can be helped and it provides vital information about the molecular biology of hemophilia.

"In families where it's been difficult to say whether the women are carriers, this seems to hold real promise," said Lusher. "There's an enormous amount of individuals who fall into that category."

True extent of AIDS in China is still a mystery

PEKING (R) — Chinese doctors trying to prevent AIDS from spreading in the world's most populous nation have said the statistics they now had did not reveal the full extent of the threat.

"In the past few years we have tested 500,000 people. The number is far less than enough to get a picture of AIDS and HIV distribution," Dai Zhicheng, director of the Ministry of Public Health's Department of Epidemic Prevention, told a news conference.

The testing is part of an AIDS control plan expected to cost at least \$6 million over three years. China will contribute \$1 million, with the rest

China needs to test three million people over the next three years to obtain a full picture of the disease, which is most serious in the drug-infested southern province of Yunnan.

from overseas.

\$800,000 for 1991 for the plan, a statement after the conference said.

Mercury dental fillings safe — scientific advisers

By Deborah Mescie
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Members of a government scientific advisory committee have said that they were confident mercury-containing dental fillings are safe for most people.

But they recommended that more research be done to allay fears of the public that the fillings can cause health problems.

Mercury is highly toxic. The question of whether mercury in dental amalgams leeches into the body and interferes with the nervous system has been debated for years.

The Food and Drug Administration asked the committee to evaluate the most recent studies.

"We did not receive any information today that would warrant saying that amalgam is unsafe," said Dr. Manville G. Duncanson Jr., chairman of the Dental Materials Department at the University of Oklahoma.

Duncanson is chairman of the FDA's dental products panel.

"There are question that

are unanswered, including the amount of mercury that may leach into the body from amalgam fillings," he said.

"These questions have to be answered. That doesn't mean that we're saying that amalgam is unsafe."

The nine-member panel was unanimous in its recommendation.

Some dentists, researchers and consumer advocates had asked the committee to call for a ban on the use of mercury in fillings.

"We believe that the data are not sufficient to demonstrate clinical harm to patients," said Robert Sheridan, director of the FDA's office of device evaluation.

Animal studies that show significant mercury absorption from dental fillings, and some anecdotal accounts of harmful effects in humans, are compelling and raise important questions, he said.

But he added no studies have been done in humans and there is no evidence that mercury amalgam fillings cause disease.

Some scientists say this may affect the brain, kidney and immune system, and might be associated with reproductive disorders.

The alternative filling materials that some dentists are using include gold, porcelain, plastic and composites.

"There is ample evidence that amalgam is safe and effective," said Dr. Robert Baratz, a physician and dentist in Boston, who spoke for the American Dental Association.

Cairo talks

(Continued from page 1)

dored by some Arab states, towards solving the Palestinian problem.

Jordan has signalled its readiness to put the Gulf war behind it and open a new leaf in inter-Arab relations despite negative signs from some other Arab states by announcing its tentative decision to attend the Cairo meeting. Mr. Masri's current tour is seen as seeking support for Jordan's pan-Arab approach at the forum.

Jordan, along with six other Arab states which opposed the anti-Iraq military coalition, did not attend a meeting of the council in Cairo in November, shortly after the headquarters of the league was moved to the Egyptian capital.

Jordan was one of the proponents of the transfer of the league headquarters to Cairo prior to the Gulf crisis. But Jordanian officials have made no secret of the Kingdom's disapproval of the means with which other Arab states pushed the issue through without undergoing the proper procedures and created a de facto situation by carrying out the actual transfer without Arab consensus. This is seen as one of the main reasons behind Jordan's absence from the November meeting.

The March 30 meeting's agenda includes a broad range of issues — collective Arab action, Arab and international affairs, economy, the boycott of Israel, the Arab-Israeli conflict and Palestinian problem and Euro-Arab dialogue in addition to administrative and financial matters of the league.

However, the state of affairs in the Arab World after the Gulf war is expected to dominate the deliberations. The war, which ended Feb. 28 with Baghdad accepting all U.N. resolutions on the Kuwaiti crisis after 40 days of allied war against it, has left Iraq a devastated country which faces billions of dollars and years of reconstruction. But more pressing is the issue of having to address the immediate health and food needs of the Iraqi people, who find themselves deprived of water, food, medicine, power and communications as a result of the devastation caused by the allies.

At the same time, it is also a foregone conclusion that some of the Arab members of the anti-Iraq coalition would use the forum to renew their attacks on fellow Arab states — including Jordan — as well as the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) for what is perceived as their pro-Iraqi position.

Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, the crown prince and prime minister of Kuwait, said Monday that his country still harboured this sentiment and let off a fresh round of criticism against Jordan and the PLO. There could not be any mistaking the tone of his comments, which indicated Kuwait is far from adopting a similar reconciliatory position such as Jordan's, an observer said.

It is also obvious that Saudi Arabia, which led the Arab side of the anti-Iraq coalition along with Egypt and Syria, also shares Kuwaiti sentiments. A very vivid sign of the situation came when Riyadh refused to allow landing rights to Royal Jordanian, Jordan's national carrier, last week.

Saudi Arabia continues to refuse Jordanian trucks entry to its territory en route to other Arab Gulf states — a traditional market for Jordan's products.

His Majesty King Hussein has rejected what was seen as a demand by the Saudi ambassador to Washington, Prince Bandar Ben Sultan, that Jordan "apologise" for its position in the Gulf war. The King recently told the New York Times that if anything Jordan had a better right to demand apologies from others for the pressure and punitive measures they applied on the Kingdom in the wake of the Gulf crisis and its refusal to join the war camp.

Rebellion

(Continued from page 1)

refugees reaching Iran, reported fighting in the southern Shiite holy city of Karbala.

Other Iraqis who left Karbala recently said that the Republican Guards had shelled the city heavily with artillery and tank canons.

Iraq has said the rebels looted and burned government buildings and shops in the city and killed hundreds of men, women and children in Karbala.

The speaker of Iraq's National Assembly told an emergency one-day session that Iran was behind the rebellion. It was the first claim by Iraq of direct Iranian

involvement in the rebellion.

"It has been established now that it was Iran who dispatched groups of saboteurs to do these acts (of rebellion)," said Saadi Mchdi Saleh.

For a good time Iran was preparing large groups of saboteurs for this day to carry out its schemes," he said.

Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani has denied Tehran has had a hand in the rebellion. But earlier this month, just a day after Iraqi Deputy Foreign Minister Saddam Hamzai ended talks in Tehran, Mr. Rafsanjani urged President Saddam Hussein to step down and for his ruling Baath Arab Socialist Party "to surrender to the will of the people."

Baghdad, which fought an eight-year war against Tehran, has already accused "outside elements" of causing widespread destruction in Iraq following the withdrawal of its troops from Kuwait ahead of the advancing U.S.-led allies.

Iraqi President Saddam said Saturday that government forces had crushed the revolt in southern Iraq, bordering Shiite Iran.

Mr. Saleh said: "Those who are well known for their perfidious acts seized the opportunity after Iran agreed to withdraw from Kuwait to destroy what the American-Zionist aggression failed to do."

He suggested that the U.S.-led coalition and Iran had coordinated a plan to destroy Iraq.

"It seems that they have agreed on these roles... the Americans... managed to destroy the basic projects and major installations. What has remained was left for those hooligans," Mr. Saleh said.

Mr. Saleh made no mention of a revolt in northern Iraq.

Few of the 250 seats allocated for National Assembly members were vacant. Two deputies wore the Kurdish national dress, turbans and baggy trousers.

In Saturday's speech, President Saddam said political reforms would be introduced in the country and a referendum on a new constitution carried out.

After speaking for five minutes, Mr. Saleh asked journalists and photographers to leave the hall. The session then continued behind closed doors.

An Iranian dissident group said Wednesday heavily-armed Iranian Revolutionary Guards disguised as rebels are crossing into northern Iraq to attack Iranian rebel bases.

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Top four women players, Edberg advance in Florida tournament

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida (AP) — Top-seeded Steffi Graf, still smarting from Monday's loss of her world no. 1 ranking to Monica Seles, swept past seventh-seeded Manuela Maleeva-Fagniere in a 6-1 6-3 quarter-final win at the \$2.55 million International Players Championships.

Top-seeded Swede Stefan Edberg had a more difficult time with hard-serving German Michael Stich, but eventually prevailed 6-4 2-6 6-4.

The second-ranked Graf of Germany often ran around her forehand and whipped shots right by the 10th-ranked Swiss. Graf took even more chances with her forehand in the second set, resulting in a few more errors.

Graf moves to 16-0 against Maleeva-Fagniere, having lost only four sets to her in their 16 meetings.

American Patrick McEnroe, who upset second-seeded Boris Becker 6-1 6-4 in the second round, ran into a roadblock in 17th-seeded Marc Rosset. The 32nd-seeded American Jim Courier posted a 7-6 (7-3) 6-3

(6-4) 6-1.

Earlier in the day, fourth-ranked Andre Agassi had to fight from a set down to beat Swede Magnus Gustafsson 6-7 6-2 7-5 in the third round. Spain's Emilio Sanchez beat American Michael Chang 5-7 6-3 6-4 in the fourth round.

The 15th-seeded Stich is always capable of causing an upset. Edberg said he was determined not to become one of his victims.

"He's got a great first serve and a great second serve," said Edberg. "It's difficult to play him because there are patches when he can blow you away. If he plays like he did today, he can beat a lot of players with his serve."

After taking the first set, Edberg fell behind in the second set, allowing the 20th-ranked Stich to break him at love in the sixth game for a 4-2 lead. Stich captured the set, but couldn't maintain momentum to take the match.

Edberg, the world no. 1, broke in the third game of the final set and cruised to the victory.

Thirteenth-seeded American Jim Courier posted a 7-6 (7-3) 6-3

fourth round win over fourth-seeded Guy Forget — his second win in 10 days over the Frenchman.

Courier, who was named Tuesday to the U.S. Davis Cup squad facing Mexico next week, beat the fifth-ranked Forget in the second set of the Indian Wells event.

Fourth-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez had fourth-round success against fellow American Pam Shriver 6-2 6-4. Shriver, who is trying to come back from shoulder surgery, fell short against the hard-hitting Fernandez's assault.

Graf now faces third-seeded Gabriela Sabatini in the semifinals. Graf holds a 20-7 edge over the Argentine, but fourth-ranked Sabatini has the recent advantage, having won their last three meetings.

"She's definitely gotten much steadier from the back and doesn't make so many errors," Graf said of Sabatini. "She does the right things at the right moment."

"I like to play against Steffi," Sabatini said. "I always play my best tennis against her."

A promising quarterfinal

matchup looms Wednesday, when Jennifer Capriati, 14, will meet top ranked Monica Seles, 17.

"I'm looking forward to it," Capriati said. "She's playing great, but if I play the way I've been playing, I think I have a good chance."

Seles won their only previous meeting, in the semifinals of last year's French Open. Capriati earned a rematch Tuesday by beating Barbara Paulus 6-1 6-3.

Sabatini has won 15 consecutive matches going into the semifinals. She is 7-20 lifetime against Graf, but has won three in a row, including the finals of the Virginia Slims of Florida on March 10.

"My tennis has improved very much," Sabatini said. "I'm playing smarter than ever, I think. I'm stronger. I'm tougher."

Graf, seeking her first tournament title since November, said she's been looking forward to facing Sabatini again.

"I hope to play the tennis I've played the last few days," she said. "If I do, I think I will enjoy it a lot."

Brazil recalls top players against Argentina

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) —

World Cup stars Branco and Careca have been recalled by Brazil for the first time since their country's disappointing exit from the World Cup finals in Italy last June.

The pair have been named in the squad for a soccer friendly in Buenos Aires on March 27 against Argentina, who knocked Brazil out of the 1990 finals in the second round.

But Brazil coach Paulo Roberto Roberio warned there was no guarantee Careca would be allowed to play by his Italian club Napoli. "I have spoken to Careca and he has shown interest in playing but I have not heard yet whether his club will release him," Falcao said.

Falcao said the other foreign-based players — Branco, Mazinho, Taffarel, Aldair and Jose Paulo — all had clauses in their contracts obliging their clubs to release them for all internationals.

The coach selected five foreign-based players for a friendly against Paraguay last month but only two were allowed to play by their clubs. Falcao's predecessor Sebastiao Lazaroni suffered the same headache during his 16 months in charge.

The other World Cup players recalled were Bebeto, Vasco Da Gama's diminutive striker, and winger Renato Portaluppi.

Careca, despite scoring both goals in his country's opening World Cup match against Sweden, was generally disappointing but Branco, the owner of a stinging left-foot shot, was one of the few Brazilians to enhance his reputation in the finals.

Bebeto has barely played club soccer since being injured in a World Cup training session, while Renato caused an international storm during the competition by demanding to be given a place in the team.

Renato threatened to "pack my bags and return to Brazil" if his demand was not met. He eventually played 10 minutes as a substitute against Argentina.

The Germans also scored four wins with Christian Troeger capturing the 200-metre free style in 1:46.99 minutes while Susanne Bosserhoff won the women's 100-metre free style in 56.72 seconds.

Anja Eichhorst won the 100-metre backstroke in 1:02.42 minutes and Christine Stevert the 100-metre butterfly at 1:00.71 minutes.

Taeksbury won the backstroke on the short 25-metre lane in 25.22 seconds. Hoffmeister was clocked 25.43 seconds, equaling the current European record.

Gery Swam the butterfly in 24.33 seconds, 0.20 seconds faster than runnerup Brung Gutzeit from France.

Ward completed the 200-metre medley race at 1:58.39 minutes.

Edging Finland's Jani Steinen who was second at 1:58.80 minutes, equal to the European record.

Nancy Sweetnam won the 400-metre medley in 4:40.73 minutes leaving Australia's Jaqueline McKenzie 4.38 seconds behind.

In the 100-metre breast stroke, Soviet world champion Elena Volkova was defeated by 17-year-old Louise Karlsson from Sweden who completed the race in 1:08.66 minutes. Volkova was clocked 1:08.86. Mammela Dalla Valle, Italy, finished third at 1:09.15 minutes.

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Taeksbury won the backstroke on the short 25-metre lane in 25.22 seconds. Hoffmeister was clocked 25.43 seconds, equaling the current European record.

Gery Swam the butterfly in 24.33 seconds, 0.20 seconds faster than runnerup Brung Gutzeit from France.

Ward completed the 200

Turkey to give Moscow \$600m

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's Eximbank will extend a total of \$600 million to the Soviet Union in 1991, mainly in export credits, the bank said Tuesday.

Moscow will use \$400 million of the credits for imports from Turkey, mostly capital goods such as machinery.

A bank official said an initial agreement was signed in December for \$300 million, but the amount was raised last week to \$400 million when a delegation headed by President Turgut Ozal visited the Soviet Union.

The talks produced another \$200 million from Eximbank to be used "to compensate for the food shortage to the Soviet Union," a bank statement said. Moscow will buy wheat, barely, flour and pasta from Turkey, it said.

It gave no details on financial terms.

By end-1991, Eximbank will have extended a total package of \$1.25 billion to the Soviet Union since 1989.

U.S. trade deficit widens to \$7 billion

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. merchandise trade deficit widened to \$7 billion in January even though American export sales climbed to a near-record, the government said Wednesday.

The Commerce Department said the gap between imports and what the United States sells overseas was 11.1 per cent higher than a December imbalance of \$6.23 billion, which had been the smallest imbalance since last June.

Sales of American goods abroad jumped 3.6 per cent to \$34.49 billion, the second-highest figure on record. The all-time high was \$35 billion set in October.

The gain in exports, however, was offset by a 4.8 per cent rise in imports, which climbed to \$41.49 billion in January. The trade deficit is the difference between the amounts of exports and imports.

Still, the strength in U.S. exports was certain to bring cheer to the government, which is counting on continued gains in overseas demand to help bring the country out of the recession.

However, private economists are not as confident as government experts who believe that export sales will continue providing as much momentum for a sluggish U.S. economy. They are worried that a slowdown growth

in many foreign markets will cut into U.S. exports this year.

The January trade deficit, if held for an entire year, would produce an imbalance of \$33.94 billion. Many private economists, however, believe that this year's deficit will be little changed from the \$101 billion gap recorded in 1990. That figure was the lowest since a \$52.1 billion shortfall in 1983.

For January, the rise in exports came from an \$800 million increase in sales of automotive vehicles and parts, a \$300 million rise in consumer exports and a \$200 million increase in sales of American farm products.

The increase in imports reflected an \$800 million increase in purchases of industrial supplies, a \$700 million increase in car imports and a \$300 million rise in purchases of consumer goods.

A big surge in the volume of oil imports did not have much effect on the bottom line because the price of oil fell sharply. The United States imported 5.19 million barrels of oil daily during January, up 21 per cent from December, but the price per barrel fell \$2.72 to \$2.98.

The various shifts left the total oil bill at \$3.24 billion up 1.6 per cent from the December level.

Sri Lanka to send workers to Kuwait

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lanka will send workers to help rebuild war-devastated Kuwait, a government official said Wednesday.

The Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment was finalising plans to send workers and technicians to clear the city and to restore water, electricity and sewage systems and repair oil wells, chairman David Soysa said.

"I don't know exactly how many jobs will be available but these areas have been identified as needing people," said Soysa, who had just returned from a five-day visit to Kuwait.

Most of the 2,000 Sri Lankans who stayed in Kuwait after the Iraqi occupation in August and throughout the Gulf war wanted to remain, he said.

"Most of them have found odd jobs and want to stay on," Soysa said.

Before the Iraqi invasion about 100,000 Sri Lankans, mostly housemaids, were working in Kuwait.

About 72,000 returned home while the rest found jobs in other countries in the region.

IMF chief suggests ban on sale of subsidised arms to Middle East

WASHINGTON (AP) — Michel Camdessus, head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), suggested Tuesday a ban on subsidising arms sales to the Middle East with government credits.

His suggestion was made in a speech to the Conference Board of Canada.

It came the day after President George Bush said he would ask Congress to let the U.S. government's Export-Import Bank underwrite as much as \$1 billion in arms sales by U.S. companies.

The United States is the biggest contributor among the fund's 155 member governments.

"Why shouldn't the arms exporting countries impose on themselves a common discipline that would effectively support the effort that is expected from the countries themselves?" Camdessus asked.

"To be more precise, couldn't they study carefully the possibility of a ban on export credit for arms sales to the Middle East?" he suggested.

Credit guarantees by their government's bank would help U.S. companies to compete with sellers of arms from other countries where governments offer similar advantages. When the government bank guarantees a loan, a commercial bank can lend the money in the assurance it will be repaid and may offer a lower rate of interest than it would otherwise ask.

Camdessus outlined a strategy to help the recovery of the Middle East from the Gulf war.

Wealthier countries in the area should increase their contributions to efforts undertaken in common, he said. He urged an exceptional effort to reduce the debt of several countries as long as they undertake new policies.

He did not name any countries in his connection. Creditor governments have agreed to help Poland by cutting its debt by 50 per cent, in part because of the increased price of oil caused by the Gulf war.

Figures compiled by the IMF and a private organisation show that military spending in the Middle East was higher than in the rest of the world.

"Countries in the Middle East had the highest relative level of expenditure, and those in the western hemisphere, the lowest," an official IMF survey of the Third World says.

The IMF said that the United States had the highest proportion of spending on the military in the industrialised world, ranging from a peak of \$6.10 out of every \$100 of wealth produced in 1986, to \$5.76 dollars in 1989, the latest year reported.

By comparison, West Germany's \$2.89 in 1983 fell to \$2.61 in 1987, says the IMF's "govern-

ment Finance Statistics Yearbook" for 1990.

Small but wealthy Oman, one of the Gulf's oil sheikdoms, led world spending, with \$19.50 for its armed forces out of every \$100 it earned in 1989, followed by Israel's \$12.52. Syria spent \$11.21 of every \$100 in 1987; the most recent year it reported.

According to the International Institute of Strategic Studies, a private organisation in London, Iraq and Saudi spending was even higher. It said Iraq spent \$28.60 of every \$100 of production on its military.

In Saudi Arabia, much richer than Iraq, military spending was \$18.19 per \$100 in 1988, the institute said.

IMF figures excluded the Soviet Union, China, Japan, Saudi Arabia and Iraq, but did look at other Middle Eastern countries, the United States and major areas throughout the 1980s.

Several Middle East countries apparently reduced military spending.

The IMF said Israel cut its defence expenditures almost in half from \$21.73 per \$100 in 1979.

Egypt dropped from \$9.57 in 1981 to \$5.88 in 1988.

Iran was spending \$5.70 dollars in 1980, the year its war with Iraq began in earnest.

S. Africa expects further GDP drop

CAPE TOWN (R) — South Africa's gross domestic product (GDP) fell by almost one per cent in the year to March and the government painted a bleak picture Wednesday of falling production and increased unemployment in the year ahead.

The finance ministry said in a budget review that mine production and agriculture were down, inflation was holding above 14 per cent, savings were low and unemployment was still rising.

"On account of the fall in the demand for South African products and an expected further shrinkage in inventories, the

chances are small of an upswing in 1991," the ministry said in the review.

"A further fall in GDP is therefore expected, accompanied by only a small increase in job opportunities and consequently a further rise in unemployment," the ministry said.

It said the surplus on the current account of the balance of payments rose to \$5.8 billion rand (\$2.2 billion) in 1990 from \$1.1 billion rand (\$1.2 billion) in 1989.

But it said the surplus was expected to fall back to between three billion rand and four billion rand in 1991 as a result of slowed world growth and poor domestic

international reactions to the

changes taking place in South Africa will also be an important determinant of the country's growth potential... the constraints on the economy emanating from international action could greatly diminish or even disappear," the ministry said.

"Expenditure on social services will already have reached 38.2 per cent of total state spending in 1991/92," it noted.

The budget review showed that 87 per cent of new job seekers failed to find fixed employment in the formal sector last year and 44 per cent of the population — about 16 million people — were surviving on "very low incomes."

Political sources said this, in turn, may signal that Major is courting popularity ahead of an early general election, possibly as soon as this June.

Opposition Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock called it "the biggest climbdown in modern political history."

The poll tax, officially called a community charge, is a levy on all adults, rich and poor, imposed under Thatcher instead of property taxes to pay for local government services ranging from schools to refuse collection.

It caused riots and cost the Conservative parliamentary seats. Critics call it an unfair burden on poorer families.

Lamont, Britain's finance minister, is slashing it by raising value added tax (VAT), which is added into prices at all stages of production and is paid on most of the goods and services which everyone buys.

It will rise from 15 to 17.5 per cent.

VAT inevitably falls harder on the affluent, who buy more.

Taxes will also rise on such perks as company cars and mobile telephones. Alcohol, tobacco and petrol go up too.

Thatcher sat stoic-faced throughout Lamont's budget

speech, in which he declared that he was increasing VAT because "it bears less heavily on poorer households than on the better off."

The mechanics of the deal are that the higher VAT will enable the central exchequer to pump £4.5 billion (\$8 billion) into local government coffers, so poll taxes are cut by an average £140 (\$250) per head.

The budget envisaged a deficit in the fiscal year starting April 1 of £8 billion (\$14.4 billion).

This move into budget deficit, to help cushion a deep recession, followed four years of surplus, or more or less balanced British budgets under Thatcher.

The chancellor made no cut in the overall tax burden on the nation, saying his prime goal was to bring down inflation. Tax breaks tend to ignite price rises.

But he said he was bringing in a "budget for business" to help companies weather the recession. Measures included a staggered two per cent cut in corporation tax and tax relief for smaller firms hit by bad debts.

Besides higher taxes on the affluent, Lamont also abolished tax relief on mortgage (home loan) repayments for big earners on the higher rate of graduated income tax.

All these measures persuaded some commentators that Major's government was making a break from the harsher policies of Thatcher's 11½-year premiership.

Labour's Kinnock, however, disagreed.

"They are even going to tax children when they buy their sweets," he said of the VAT rise.

black market.

Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin has attacked Gorbachev over his price policy, accusing him of failing to consult the people over the issue.

But Tuesday's official reports suggested Russia had signed the agreement along with other republics.

Meat and bread prices will triple, while eggs, tea and cooking oil will double. Cigarettes will rise by 50 per cent.

Prices were frozen for medicines, coffee, petrol, paraffin fuel and vodka.

Soviet authorities portrayed impending steep price rises as a vital step towards market-oriented economy but acknowledged some consumers would be particularly hard-hit.

Liberal politicians accepted the need for price reform, but warned of social upheaval if the government failed to pursue reforms and end chronic shortages of food and staple goods.

"Of course I would not say that the reform benefits each and every one of us, but on the whole it is in the interests of the entire population," N. Cheshenko, deputy head of the State Labour Committee, told the Communist Party daily Pravda.

He said those who stood to lose the most from the price rises were workers with relatively high salaries who would receive less in compensation.

Sergei Ryabchenko, a member of the liberal inter-regional group in the Soviet parliament, conceded the rises were necessary but urged Pavlov to come up with a concrete plan on economic development.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Tuesday, March 19, 1991		Central Bank official rates
Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	676.0	680.0
Pound Sterling	1197.7	1204.9
Deutschmark	409.7	412.3
Swiss franc	475.5	478.4
French franc	120.3	121.0

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

Tuesday, March 19, 1991		Central Bank official rates
Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	1,775/65	1,780/65
One U.S. dollar	1,156/65	1,164/65
1,649/6500	1,658/6500	
1,854/650	1,863/650	
1,425/16	1,432/16	
33,95/99	34,02/99	
5,615/50	5,622/50	
1226/1227	1233/1227	
138,55/65	139,55/65	
6,0120/70	6,0127/70	
6,4325/75	6,4325/75	
6,3250/3300	6,3250/3300	
One ounce of gold	364.30/364.80	364.30/364.80

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

SYDNEY		New York's sharp fall sent the All Ordinaries Index down 27.2 points to 1429.3.

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Khaleda Zia takes office as Bangladesh premier

DHAKA (R) — Begum Khaleda Zia, widow of an assassinated president, took office Wednesday as Bangladesh's first woman prime minister and said her installation heralded an era of new democracy.

She pledged to bring clean government and proper accounting to a country economists say has been drained by graft and corruption.

Acting President Shahabuddin Ahmed administered the oath of office to Khaleda and her cabinet of 11 ministers and 21 ministers of state at a simple ceremony witnessed by civil and military officials, diplomats, teachers and newly-elected parliamentarians.

Wearing a white sari and standing beneath a glittering chandelier in the presidential palace, she vowed to preserve, protect and defend the constitution.

She later told journalists that her government would give the country a new democracy.

"I can assure you that a new era of democracy has started with the installation of this government. A new day has dawned," she said.

Khaleda's appointment as prime minister ended three weeks of confusion after Feb. 27 parliamentary elections in which her Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) won 239 of the 299 seats contested.

Ramos moves towards being Aquino's successor

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (AP) — Defense Secretary Fidel Ramos is poised to seek the presidency, and aides believe President Corazon Aquino will endorse him even if it means splitting the nation's largest party.

Ramos told reporters Tuesday that he will join the largest party, the Struggle of the Democratic Filipino. Thursday after meeting with Rep. Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, its secretary-general and Mrs. Aquino's brother.

"Soon after, I'll meet with the president, hopefully to ask her final blessings," Ramos said.

During a visit this week in western Mindanao Island, Ramos dropped numerous hints that he is prepared to run elections set for May 1992. Mrs. Aquino has ruled out a second term.

"Thank you for helping me celebrate my 59th birthday," the West Point graduate and former military chief of staff told a meeting of Mindanao mayors and governors when he turned 63 last Monday.

"Next year, I'll be 40," Ramos quipped. "And you know, life begins at 40."

Aides said Mrs. Aquino was delaying in endorsing Ramos in deference to House Speaker Ramon Mitra and to avoid a split in the Democratic Filipino Party, which Mitra organised in 1988.

Mitra, a former agriculture secretary, wants to run and has hinted to supporters that he might bolt the party and cam-

paign to oust him.

Ershad, a former general who seized power in a 1982 coup, is in detention facing trial by a special tribunal for possession of illegal weapons and amassing wealth beyond his means.

Khaleda, 46, becomes the first woman prime minister in Bangladesh and the second in any Muslim country. Former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was expected to become the leader of the opposition.

There was no immediate explanation for their absence but a League source told Reuters it was a protest at the appointment of a BNP government despite Hasina's objection.

Khaleda repeated her promise that her government would try to stamp out corruption, restore law and order and ensure clean government.

The economy, appointed by Ahmad, said high expenditure, low investment, poor national savings and growing poverty had left the economy in a shambles.

"We know what we are inheriting. That's why we had asked the caretaker government to publish a white paper on the state of the economy," Khaleda said.

She was referring to alleged corruption and nepotism during the rule of former President Hosain Mohammad Ershad, who was forced to resign last December after a stormy opposition cam-

paign to oust him.

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NATO chief warns Moscow on arms pact

BRUSSELS (R) — NATO Secretary-General Manfried Woerner warned the Soviet Union Wednesday that arms control and construction of a new European order could not go ahead until Moscow resolved a row over a landmark arms treaty.

Woerner told a NATO seminar on the Soviet economy that the Western alliance was determined to move ahead with the arms control process to limit nuclear weapons in Europe to minimal levels and reduce military manpower and equipment.

"Yet before we can move ahead, the Soviet Union must comply fully with its obligations under the CFE (treaty cutting Conventional Forces in Europe)," he said.

"This is not a matter of technical interpretation. This treaty will unlock the syndrome of confrontation and establish a durable basis for cooperation between the Soviet Union and our alliance, the basis on which the future European architecture can be constructed."

It was one of the strongest indications so far that improved relations between Moscow and the West might be affected by the dispute over the CFE.

NATO diplomats say there is

little chance of finding a solution soon. The row has delayed the treaty's implementation and blocked the road to further important arms agreements.

During a visit to Moscow last week, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker failed to resolve the disagreement, chiefly about whether the Kremlin can exclude certain units from the treaty.

The treaty, which would scrap thousands of tanks, artillery pieces and armoured vehicles in an area stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals, was signed in Paris by the member of NATO and the now-defunct Warsaw Pact last November.

Follow-on talks about cutting troop levels in Europe started in Vienna. But the NATO nations have decided to effectively suspend negotiations until the row is resolved. The talks go into an official recess Thursday.

The United States, Germany and the Soviet Union have all indicated they will hold off ratifying the original treaty, which was signed during a 35-nation summit to set the seal on the end of the cold war and begin shaping a new Europe.

The Soviet Union has requested a delayed summit between Soviet President Mikhail

Gorbachev and U.S. President George Bush in May but received a no-committal response, a U.S. official said Tuesday.

The official, who spoke to Reuters on condition that he remain anonymous, said the issue had come up during U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's visit to Moscow last week.

"We had to say 'we'll see,'" the official said of the U.S. response to the Soviet proposal.

The summit was originally scheduled for mid-February but was postponed by mutual consent until some time in the first half of this year, officially because the Gulf war was raging.

Unofficially U.S. officials said they were unhappy about Soviet actions in the Baltic republics and the lack of progress in arms control negotiations.

The administration official said there was a good chance of holding a summit by the end of this year but it might not take place before the end of June as originally stated.

"I'm not saying it will not be in the first half of this year. But it will not necessarily be then either," he said.

While in Moscow, Baker was unable to achieve progress on two arms control agreements.

The United States accuses the Soviet Union of violating the spirit of the CFE agreement by reassigning three armoured divisions to its navy to circumvent agreed weapons limits.

The Bush administration says it will not submit the treaty for congressional ratification until the problem is resolved to its satisfaction. Without ratification the treaty will not be in force and its complex verification procedures remain a dead letter.

The START treaty was supposed to have been signed at the February summit after Bush and Gorbachev signed a draft treaty at their Washington summit last June.

But technical disagreements have dogged the final stages on negotiations. U.S. officials are convinced that one reason for the difficulties is the weakening of moderates in the Soviet government as symbolised by last December's resignation of former Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, and the renewed primacy of the Soviet military.

U.S. Defence Secretary Dick Cheney told the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives Tuesday that completion of the treaties was in doubt.

Yugoslav army, like all else, is far from united

BELGRADE (AP) — As their influence erodes, hard-line Communists are pressing the military to impose martial law to prevent what they claim is an imminent outbreak ethnic unrest or even civil war.

The team said in a report issued Tuesday it had been unable to get satisfactory answers on the investigation from the police, who said the constable assigned to probe the allegations was on vacation.

Residents in towns around the overwhelmingly Muslim Kashmir daily Inquirer.

Possible candidates from other parties include Senate President Jovito Salonga, leader of the Liberal Party, former Agrarian Reform Secretary Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Sen. Joseph Estrada, Vice President Salvador Laurel, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile and businessman Eduardo Cojuangco.

Aides say Ramos wants Mrs. Aquino's endorsement because it would assure support from pro-administration governors, mayors and the bureaucracy. But Mitra is backed by influential congressmen because of his control of legislative patronage.

But Mitra is widely perceived as a traditional politician whose style of deal-making would perpetuate a system critics believe is unresponsive to the needs of an impoverished, divided nation.

The strike was called in response to a report by human rights activists on charges by women in Kunon Posphora that 50 drunken soldiers invaded the village and gang-raped women last month.

The activists, led by retired chief Justice Mufti Bahaudin Farooqi, said they interviewed 53 women who alleged they had been raped on the night of Feb. 23.

His team, accompanied by reporters, was told the troops arrived late at night, herded the village men into a granary and raped women aged between 18

and 80.

Kashmiri officials said the charges were being investigated.

Villagers told the human rights team local police had not yet organised medical examinations for the women.

The team said in a report issued Tuesday it had been unable to get satisfactory answers on the investigation from the police, who said the constable assigned to probe the allegations was on vacation.

Police have reported some 2,300 deaths in Delhi-ruled Kashmir since the anti-Indian rebellion erupted 15 months ago.

There have been regular reports of abuses by Indian soldiers and paramilitary troops — who are largely Hindus — including executions, torture, rape and burning down villages in revenge for militant attacks.

The Indian government, which rules Jammu and Kashmir through Governor Girish SAXENAS, acknowledged some limited abuses, but says most of the charges are militant propaganda.

But whether true or not, they are widely believed by the Muslims of the Kashmir Valley who have given widespread support to the militants.

India accused Pakistan, which rules one-third of Kashmir, of fomenting the revolt and of arming and training the militants.

Islamabad denies the charges, saying it gives only moral and political support.

The two countries have fought three wars, two of them over Kashmir, since becoming independent of Britain in 1947.

The high command statement Tuesday sharply criticised those moves and at the same time demanded that Yugoslav republics make good on their pledges to the military budget.

The republics are far behind on their payments.

Milosevic and the army are united in the need to keep Yugoslavia a united and centralised command in times of war and of joint air and naval forces, the general see it as abolishing the present armed forces.

Although the concept provides for the retention of a centralised military service to eight months and is refusing to send any more recruits to the army. Instead, they will serve in Slovenian police or territorial defence units.

The high command statement Tuesday sharply criticised those moves and at the same time demanded that Yugoslav republics make good on their pledges to the military budget.

Despite having an officer corps dominated by pro-Communist ethnic Serbs, the army mirrors the ethnic divisions that are one of Yugoslavia's main problems.

Most rank-and-file conscripts are ethnic Albanians, who dislike Serbs for their repressive policies against the Albanian minority, as well as Slovaks, Croats and Macedonians who oppose army policy of busing conscripts serve their 12-month compulsory terms away from their home republic.

After several days of silence, the military high command on Tuesday declared that it "shall not interfere in the political agreements about the future of the country."

But under no circumstances would the army permit "inter-ethnic, inter-republic and inter-party bickering" or "civil war," it said.

That appeared to lessen the chances for military intervention, but not to eliminate it entirely.

The non-Communist leadership of four of Yugoslavia's six states dismiss the threat of ethnic violence as a ploy by Serbia's Marxist leaders to hold on to power despite growing public opposition. Analysts believe military intervention could offer the last chance for the survival of Slobodan Milosevic, Serbia's president.

The reforms are expected to advance peace talks with UNITA — the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola — which has been fighting the government since independence.

UNITA said Monday he hoped a ceasefire could be signed April 15. UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi has also suggested a truce could be signed next month.

But the two sides remain divided over a timetable for first free elections. On Sunday Savimbi said they should be held by May 1992.

Many generals are furious with the pro-Western government of

Angolan parliament meets to adopt democratic reforms

LUANDA, Angola (AP) — Angola's parliament Wednesday opened a session expected to formalise democratic reforms that could hasten the end of a 16-year civil war between government forces and U.S.-backed rebels.

The five-day People's Assembly meeting is expected to approve a revision of the country's Marxist-inspired constitution and a package of legislation to instigate economic and political needs.

Proposed laws will allow the formation of opposition parties, press freedom and greater protection for private property to promote a mixed economy.

President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos, addressing the opening session Wednesday, admitted the failings of the Communist system adopted since Angola's independence from Portugal in 1975.

"The system of economic direction and management did not produce a adequate material riches," he told the 319 deputies.

"The political system did not give a full reply to citizens' spiritual needs."

The reforms are expected to advance peace talks with UNITA — the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola — which has been fighting the government since independence.

Proposed laws will not fought only for those who were involved in the struggle... we intend to create one Namibia, one nation."

The transition to black rule and peace has been comparatively smooth.

The government is under pressure from many of its own supporters to redistribute wealth and create jobs for former guerrillas and other activists.

Some SWAPO backers complain that the government does not have the money to back such major proposals.

Dirk Mudge, leader of the

opposition Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, said the government's economic aims were "good news."

"The... (plan) spells out the government's intentions, but the budget shows they can't be implemented," he said.

Critics have seized on what they claim is government extravagance — including creating new government ministries to provide jobs for SWAPO leaders and Nujoma's expensive state visits to Cuba and other destinations.

The government, while saying little about how it will pay, has embarked on plans to try to ease unemployment and other economic problems. Measures include refusing work permits to non-Namibians and additional government hiring.

Critics contend the programmes are designed to increase the influence of the large Ovambo

tribe — the powerbase of SWAPO. This has unsettled some in the country deeply divided.

But a senior government official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said democracy had little meaning for many people if it did not include good jobs and housing.

"There are literally thousands of our soldiers out there with no jobs," he said of former SWAPO fighters. "They are growing impatient with us. It is a very dangerous state of affairs."

Despite all the problems, Namibia is a rare example of political harmony in Africa. Moses Kaifiuqoua, leader of the opposition Patriotic National front, told parliament Mooday.

He said the transition to black rule was remarkably smooth compared to the civil wars in Angola, Mozambique and other nations to the region.

Oslo (AP) — Mayor Arne Nilsen wants to make grumpiness illegal in his island community of Sund. Nilsen told an Oslo newspaper that he will propose a resolution at a town council meeting requiring 5,000 Sund residents to be happy and think positive, while banning crankiness. "Unless the other council members are in a bad mood, I expect a majority in favour," the Dagbladet newspaper quoted him as saying. Sund residents are not abnormally gloomy but "get caught up in negative and sad things, rather than seeing all there is to be happy about. I am trying to do something about it," he said. Ircable islanders will not be prosecuted. But Nilsen said the lightened edict might jolt them into better spirits. The proposal exempts suckers with good cause, such as the brokenhearted